LIBRARY
OF THE
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
AT
PRINCETON, N. J.

DONATION OF
SAMUEL AGNEW,
OF PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Letter 81-2
No. 50

May 22d 1861

COLLECTION OF PURITAN AND
ENGLISH THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

LIBRARY OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

SCC
9155

A

VINDICATION

OF THE

Archbiſhop TILLOTSON's Sermons,

Concerning the

Divinity and Incarnation of our B. Saviour, &c.

IMPRIMATUR,

Lamb. Nov.
27, 1694.

R. A. BARKER.

A

VINDICATION

OF THE

SERMONS

OF

His Grace *JOHN* Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*,

CONCERNING THE

Divinity and Incarnation of our B. Saviour:

AND

Of the Lord Biſhop of *Worceſter*'s Sermon on *the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Faith:*

FROM THE

EXCEPTIONS of a late Book, Entituled, *Conſiderations on the Explications of the Doctrine of the* TRINITY.

To which is annexed,

A Letter from the Lord Biſhop of *Sarum* to the Author of the ſaid *Vindication*, on the ſame Subject.

LONDON:
Printed for Ric. Chiſwell, at the *Roſe and Crown* in St. *Paul*'s Church-yard. MDCXCV.

A

VINDICATION

OF THE

SERMONS

TO

His Honoured FRIEND,

JAMES CHADWICK, Esq;.

THE Present I here make you being a Vindication of my late LORD of *Canterbury*, and the Cause he seasonably appeared in, and successfully defended, the Dedication of it seems of right to belong to you, who besides the Happiness of a near Alliance and a long and inward Acquaintance, had a Just Esteem and Veneration for Him. It was not without His GRACE's Direction and Encouragement, that I entred upon this Work; and had He lived to have perus'd the Whole, as He did a Part

of it, (a few Days before his Laſt Hours) it had come with greater Advantage into the world, and much more to my own Satisfaction, as having paſſed the Trial of that Exact and Impartial Judgment which he was wont to exerciſe in Matters of this Nature. But however it may fall ſhort in that Particular, ſuch as it is, I here preſent it to you, not doubting (though it may not deſerve it for its own ſake) but you will accept it in Remembrance of ſo Excellent a Friend, and as a Teſtimony of all due Reſpect from,

SIR,

Your Affectionate Servant,

J. WILLIAMS.

THE

THE PREFACE.

THE Subject which the Author of the Conſiderations *undertakes, is a prime Article of the Chriſtian Faith, and ſo requires Serioufneſs and Decorum in the Management of it: And the Perſons to whom he declares himſelf an Adverſary, are not only of an eminent Order and Station in the Church, but alſo ſuch as have approved themſelves in their Writings to be of that Learning and Judgment, that Temper and Moderation, that their Adverſary cannot but pay ſome Reverence, in Expreſſions at leaſt, to their Perſons for it.*

But notwithſtanding this, as if he had a diſtruſt in his Cauſe, and durſt not venture it abroad into the world upon the Strength of its own Reaſon and Authority, he ſoon endeavours to prepoſſeſs his unwary Readers with ſuch Inſinuations as he thinks will make them, if not of his own Party, yet ſuſpect the Sincerity of the other.

For would you know who thoſe are that he proclaims War againſt? They are one while a poor ſort of weak people at the beſt, that, he ſaith, neither have nor can defend their Cauſe, *but* have given it up to the *Socinians: But if you would indeed know who they are, in their proper colours; they are* the great Penſioners of the world, *that are* bribed with great Rewards. *They are of a Church*, whoſe Fears and Aws are greater than their Bribes. *Another while they are* great men indeed that defend the Do-

ctrine of the Trinity againſt them, but 'tis that they **Muſt** maintain it, *p.* 44. *So that ſet aſide Preferments, Fears and Awes, and without doubt theſe* Great Men, *and the whole Church and Nation (as he would have it believed) would* Socinianiſe, *and become their Proſelytes. Would one think that this Perſon had ever read the Character his Grace has given his Predeceſſors in that Controverſy, who uſed* generally to lay aſide unſeemly Reflections, *&c? Would one think this to be the Perſon that in the Page before ſaid, That the Archbiſhop* inſtructed the *Socinians* themſelves with the Air and Language of a Father, not of an Adverſary or Judge? *Or rather, has he not given us reaſon to think he would have theſe doubtful Expreſſions conſtrued to the diſadvantage of him whom he therein pretends to commend? Or does he think, that after all, he has wiped his mouth, and comes off with ſome decorum, that* he asks Pardon, if there be any thing here ſaid, not reſpectful enough.

Solomon *ſaith*, As a mad man who caſteth firebrands, arrows, and death, ſo is the man that deceiveth (*or as the* Septuagint *reads it*, traduceth) his neighbour, and ſaith, Am I not in ſport? *For can any thing blacker be ſaid, than that becauſe of the* Preferments *on one ſide, and the* Fears *and* Aws *on the other, theſe* Great Men defend the Doctrine of the Trinity, *and defend it* becauſe they muſt. *All that can be ſaid is, that in his opinion theſe are* fatal Biaſſes; *in his opinion, I ſay, who after all his pretence to a* freedom from theſe Biaſſes *which the* Great Penſioners of the world *are under the power of, cannot ſo ſmother it, but upon occaſion it will break forth:* O, *ſaith he,* Let the Church-Preferments be propoſed as the Reward of only Learning and Piety, *and then mighty things ſhall be done,* and it ſhall be ſoon ſeen how many eyes this Liberty would open. *Surely he muſt have too* fatal *an inclination this way himſelf, that can think ſo ill*

of

of mankind, and of such who are known to have been tried when time was, but despised his sort of Bribes and Fears too, when armed with Power and Authority; when they, with a bravery becoming their Learning and Integrity, dar'd to own (in his Phrase) not only an inconvenient *but a* dangerous Truth, *p.* 65.

Surely this is a sort of treatment that these Venerable Persons might not have expected from one of that denomination, that used to argue with decency. *But what may not be expected from him, who has the confidence to tell the World, that the* Ancient Unitarians *did generally reject the Gospel, and other Pieces now attributed to St.* John, *and said they were written by the Heretick* Cerinthus? *p.* 50, *&c.*

And because he thought himself obliged rather to vindicate those beloved Predecessors of his (as he would have it) than those Divine Books; he pretends particularly to set down their Reasons in order; of which matter, though (as he tells us) he will affirm nothing; *yet, saith he,* I should be glad to see an Answer to their Exceptions.

After which, I hope these Great men will think it no disparagement to suffer the utmost indignity in such Company as that of the Divine Evangelist.

But of this more in its proper place.

But why doth our Author thus lead up the Van, and bring up the Rear of his Answer to these Venerable Persons, with this popular Topick of Church-Preferments, and Church-Fears? Was there never a time when the Church of God professed the same Tenets which our Church defends, without any of those great Rewards *to* bribe *them; and when on all sides they were beset with the* Aws *and* Fears *of a Furious and Embitter'd Adversary? Was there not a time when his* Unitarians *possess'd some of the greatest Preferments, when (as our Author tells us) they had their* Paulus Patriarch of Antioch; and Photinus Metropolitan

of

of Illyricum; and that their Followers abounded every-where, *&c? p.* 53.

And I may tell him as a secret, Was there not a time when the Power of these fatal Biasses *was abroad, that their* Metropolitans *were not wont to treat the* Trinitarians with the Air and Language of a Father, *but* of an Adversary, and a *Tyrannical* Judge? *What else was the meaning of the Commotions, Violences, and Outrages us'd in those days, when Fire and Faggot were even among them in fashion; when Bishops were deposed, exiled, slain, and the whole Empire in a Combustion by those Infamous Practices? Surely (as our Author saith of his Adversaries)* if those persons had believed as they said, they could never think it necessary to use the Precaution of such mighty Awes and Draconick Sanctions, to maintain a Truth so obvious, as they pretend, to every unprejudiced, and every honest man, *p.* 54.

This, I doubt me, is in his words a Thorny and ungrateful *Subject. And he may thank himself for giving the occasion; and me for not tracing it further.*

For which, as I am not conscious to my self of having done them any wrong; so I don't think it fit to conclude my Preface, as he doth his, with asking his pardon.

ERRATA.

PAge 6. l. 28. dele from *and* to *Perswasion.* p. 12. l. 25. r. *uncouth.* p. 13. l. ult. r. *Paraphrase.* p. 18. l. 16. r. *What if.* p. 26. l. 15. for *usually* r. *really.* p. 71. l. 15. after *place* make a (,) l. 16. for *and* r. *And.* l. 17. after *created* make a (:)

A VIN-

A VINDICATION OF THE SERMONS

Of His *Grace* the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*,

Concerning the

Divinity and Incarnation of our B. Saviour, &c.

SECT. I.

Of the Deity of our Saviour.

THE Author of the *Conſiderations* having taken a liberty of diſperſing the matter before him without any juſt order, doth accordingly often repeat things of the ſame kind; making ſome ventures upon a Point in one place, and taking it up again in another; ſo that his Reader is often rather amuſed than ſatisfied. Tho withal, he takes occaſion to quicken his Matter (which would otherwiſe have proved nauſeous and heavy) with ſeveral pert Remarks and Reflections. But being my deſign is not like

a *Man of Myſtery* (as he ſcoffingly repreſents it) to darken the Cauſe, or to caſt a miſt before the Eyes of the Reader; I ſhall gently lead him by the hand, and endeavour to put what I have to ſay, into that order, that whatever force is in it, the Reader may ſoon diſcover; or what defects may be in it, he may be able to detect.

This Author allows His Grace to *be open and ingenuous in declaring his Opinion of the Trinity*; and is pleaſed to allow him a *right to alledge particular Scriptures to prove the Divinity of our Saviour.* And whether he has proved it or not, is the Point in Controverſy.

Before I proceed to which, I ſhall briefly ſtate the Point, and ſhew what are the diſtinct Opinions of the *Orthodox*, the *Arians*, and *Socinians*, concerning it; for into one of theſe, is the whole to be reſolved.

'The *Orthodox* hold, That Chriſt the Word, and only begot-'ten of the Father, was truly and really God from all Eternity; 'God by Participation of the Divine Nature and Happineſs toge-'ther with the Father, and by way of Derivation from him, as 'Light from the Sun; and that he made all Creatures, and ſo 'could no more be a Creature, than it is poſſible for a Creature to 'make it ſelf. Thus *A. Bp.* p. 23, 37, 38.

'The *Arians* conceive, That ſometime before the World was 'made, God generated the Son after an ineffable manner, to 'be his Inſtrument and Miniſter in making the World. And this 'Son is called God in Scripture, not in the moſt perfect Senſe, 'but with reſpect to the Creatures whom he made. So our Author, *p.* 46. *a*

'*Socinus* held, That the Son was not in Being till he was 'the Son of the Virgin; and that therefore he was a God, not 'in Nature, but by way of Office, Miſſion, or Repreſentation, 'as *Moſes*, and others, are called God in Scripture. So our Author, *p.* 48. *b*

Againſt theſe two laſt, his Grace directed his Diſcourſe, and took them up in order; and in the firſt place founded his Argument upon the Firſt Chapter of St. *John*'s Goſpel.

Here his Adverſary labours with all his might to put by the force of thoſe Arguments. Doth the Archbiſhop reaſon from the Context? If you will believe this Author, this Text *is alledged impertinently by him for the* Trinitarians, *which it doth not favour, no,*

not

not in the leaſt. That his *Grace can raiſe the Expreſſions no higher than* Arianiſm, *p.* 46. That *as for the Hiſtorical Occaſion aſſigned by his Grace, there is no Hiſtorian* (he is ſure, *no Ancient Hiſtorian*) *aſſigns it.* And *that many of the Ancients did believe that* Cerinthus *was the true Author of the Goſpel imputed to St. John*; and that the *Ancient* Unitarians *did reject the Goſpel, Epiſtles, and Revelation now attributed to him*, p. 49, 50.

This is the Sum of what he has ſaid; all of which will be comprehended under the following Heads.

1. I ſhall conſider the Authority of St. *John*'s Goſpel, and other Writings aſcribed to him.

2. I ſhall conſider the Authority of thoſe *Unitarians* who, he ſaith, rejected thoſe Writings.

3. If St. *John* proves to be the Author of the Goſpel, I ſhall conſider the occaſion upon which he is ſaid to have written that Book.

4. I ſhall defend the *Orthodox* Explication of it, given by the Archbiſhop.

1. I ſhall conſider the Authority of thoſe Writings, which are uſually aſcribed to St. *John*, *viz.* The Goſpel, Three Epiſtles, and the Revelation.

It's much, that we ſhould be put upon the proof of this at this time of day, and by one that profeſſes himſelf to believe the Chriſtian Religion; of which inconſiſtency, I think it's much more difficult to give an account, than of the Writings of that Apoſtle, called in queſtion by his dear Friends, the *Ancient Unitarians.*

It is certain, that there was not the leaſt occaſion given him from the Point in diſpute to enter upon this matter, where both ſides agreed, or would be thought to be agreed about the Authority of the Book they reaſon from: And which he ſaith, is *with great Colour alledged for the* Arian *Doctrine*, p. 46. and that *Socinus*'s Explication of it, *would perfectly agree to the Lord Chriſt.* But I muſt confeſs, he has given too great reaſon to ſuſpect, that he is in this Point of the ſame mind with the *Ancient Unitarians*; and would allow *Cerinthus*, or *Simon Magus*, or any of the like Rabble, to be Author of thoſe Writings, rather than that Divine Apoſtle. But as he wiſely obſerves, that thoſe *An-*

cient Unitarians that had rejected them; 'Yet, becauſe they ſaw 'it begun to grow into Credit among the other Denominations 'of Chriſtians, many of which had been ſeduced by the *Platonick* 'Philoſophers that came over to Chriſtianity; therefore they were 'careful to ſhow them, that it was capable of a very allowable 'Senſe; and that it doth not appear, that either St. *John*, or '*Cerinthus*, intended to advance a Second God, *p.* 53. *a*

That is, in plain and honeſt *Engliſh*, they themſelves did not at all believe thoſe to be the Works of St. *John*; but becauſe there was no going againſt the Stream, and that *among the other Denominations of Chriſtians* theſe were univerſally received, they would then ſwim with it; and then whoever was the Author, whether St. *John* or *Cerinthus*, was no *Trinitarian*. And if they could have made this out to the ſatisfaction of the adverſe Party, and there had been nothing wanting but their Approbation of the aforeſaid Works to have made the Chriſtians of other Denominations intirely theirs; then they that at firſt held, that *Cerinthus*, and not St. *John*, was the Author; and towards an Accommodation, came ſo far, as to ſay for convenience ſake, St. *John*, or *Cerinthus*, to remove all rubs out of the way, and to have compleated the deſign, would without doubt have intirely come over ſo far to them, whatever they themſeves thought; and they would have conſented that St. *John*, and not *Cerinthus*, was the Author. But alas! that was too hard a task, for St. *John* himſelf would not bend and comply, and could not be made a *Unitarian*. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*, &c. was as ſtable as a Rock; and therefore if St. *John* would not be for them, they would not be for him. And then all the *Unitarians* with one conſent reject the Goſpel, Epiſtles, and Revelation, and give the Honour from St. *John* to *Cerinthus*, who ſhould be ſaid to write them, to *confirm this Heretick's Cabaliſtick and Platonick Notions about the* λόγος, *or Word, and his* Jewiſh *Dreams about the Millenary Kingdom*, p. 50.

Now which part our Author will take to, whether that of the Ancient *Unitarians*, *Who*, he ſaith, *were Contemporaries to the Firſt Fathers of the Church, and were Older than any of thoſe Fathers whoſe Works are now extant* (if we will believe him); whether, I ſay, he will take to them and reject theſe Books, or whether forſake his Friends, and ſide with *thoſe Fathers whoſe Works are*

now,

now extant, and the rest of the Catholick Church in receiving them, I am not able positively to determine; for he holds us in suspence and saith, *He will affirm nothing in the matter, but should be glad to see a good Answer to the Exceptions against these Books, which we receive as St.* John's, *that were made by the Ancient* Unitarians.

I do not think my self obliged to enter into the merits of that cause, unless he will yield those Books of St. *John* to be for the *Trinitarians*, and therefore calls their Authority in question: But when he professes St. *John not to favour, no not in the least, the* Trinitarian *Doctrine*, and to be wholly *Socinian*, What need is there to prolong the time and postpone the Consideration of the main Cause, and that I must be put upon the Proof of this, and hew my way through all those formidable Arguments of the *Unitarians* against St. *John*'s Writings, before I must be admitted to Argue the Point in Debate? Which is, as if when his *Grace* had said, That the first Chapter of *Genesis* might as well be Interpreted of a new Moral Creation, as the first Chapter of St. *John*; before he would allow me to proceed to the Proof of this, he should require me to shew that *Moses* wrote the Book of *Genesis*, and oblige me to Answer all the Arguments of *Abenezra* against it.

But how impertinent soever this may be, yet to shew my self a fair Adversary, I will return him his Complement (since I have time for it) that *he shall not* (as he saith to his *Grace*) *put that question, which I will not satisfy, if I can, and reasonably may.*

Let us then *See* (for he has undertaken to shew us them) *what were the Allegations of the* Unitarians *out of* Eusebius, *but especially out of* St. Epiphanius, *who hath Written very largely of this matter* (as he saith).

For these Arguments this Author refers us to *Eusebius* and *Epiphanius*; but as for *Eusebius*, he says nothing of these Arguments our Author cites him for; and as for what are in *Eusebius*, they are not *the Allegations of the Unitarians*, but of some of the otherwise Orthodox against the *Apocalypse*, as I shall shew.

As for *Epiphanius*, our Author saith, *He hath written very largely of this matter*: but if he has, it had become him to have observ'd that it was because of the Answer he has given to the Arguments which the *Alogi* (in our Author's English, the *Unitarians*).

rians) alledged againſt St. *John*'s Writings, in which that Hiſtorian is very particular; and not to propoſe them as if they had ſtood the ſhock of ſeveral Ages, and to this day wanted a Reply: for after this manner he introduces them, *I ſhould be glad to ſee a good Anſwer to the Exceptions of the* Unitarians, *againſt the Books which we receive as St.* John's. But perhaps in his eſteem what *Epiphanius* hath ſaid, is not *a good Anſwer*; and as impertinent and *ridiculous* as that he makes for him in the caſe of *Thyatira*, of which more anon.

It's time now to examine them.

Object. 1. The *Unitarians* ſaid, That it was the current Opinion and general Tradition, that *Cerinthus*, and not St. *John*, was Author of the Goſpel, Epiſtles, and Revelation, that go under St. *John*'s name: for as to the Revelation, it was ſcarce doubted by any to be the Work of *Cerinthus*; and as ſuch, was wrote againſt by divers Learned men of the Catholick Perſuaſion, as 'tis now called.

A. The Anſwer *Epiphanius* gives to that Clauſe about *Cerinthus*, is, 'How could *Cerinthus* be the Author of that which was directly oppoſite to him: for *Cerinthus* would have Chriſt to be a meer and late-born man, whereas St. *John* ſaith, *the Word always was, and came from Heaven, and was made fleſh.* Now I conceive this Anſwer of *Epiphanius* to be good, unleſs they would have *Cerinthus* to contradict himſelf.

As to the other Clauſes of our Author's Objections, (for they are not in *Epiphanius*) nothing is more falſe, than that it was *the current Opinion and general Tradition that* Cerinthus was the Author of all thoſe Writings; and that *the Revelation was ſcarce doubted by any* to be his, and was wrote againſt, as ſuch, by *divers of the Catholick Perſuaſion*: For,

1. There were ſome Books of St. *John*, of which there never was any queſtion in the Chriſtian Church, which *Euſebius* calls ἀναντιῤῥήτως γεγραφὰς, ſuch is his Goſpel, which *Irenæus*, and *Euſebius* from him, ſay he publiſhed, while at *Epheſus*, at the Inſtance of the *Aſian* Biſhops, and as ſuch is often quoted by the Fathers. This *Sandius*, a late Author of the *Unitarians* acknowledges, who ſaith, The Goſpel was always accounted Canonical. Such again is the firſt Epiſtle of St. *John*, which, ſaith *Euſebius*, is admitted by the preſent as it was by the ancient Chriſtians without diſpute. So St. *Jerom*; upon which *Grotius* ſaith, That it was never doubted to be St. *John*'s. So *Sandius* again. 2. Thoſe

Eccleſ. Hiſt. l. 3. c. 24. & 25: *Iren. l. 3. c. 1.* *Euſeb. l. 5. c. 8.* *Hieron. Eccleſ. Script.* *Sandius de Script. Eccleſ.*

2. Thoſe Books that were not ſo generally receiv'd as St. *John*'s, were yet for the moſt part receiv'd as Canonical. Such were the 2*d*. and 3*d*. Epiſtles; of which ſome would have another *John*, call'd *John* the Presbyter, to be the Author, as St. *Jerom* ſaith, and *Grotius* from him; but for the moſt part it was believed to be St. *John* the Evangeliſt *: Againſt which (it ſeems) the *Ancient Unitarians* had nothing particularly to object; for elſe we ſhould have learn'd it from our Author.

* *Euſeb. l. 7. c. 24.*

Of this ſort is the *Apocalypſe*; of which, ſaith our Author, *it was ſcarce doubted by any to be the Work of* Cerinthus. *Euſebius* indeed ſaith, *Some do queſtion it*: But who and how many were they on the other ſide that did not doubt of either its Authority or Author, even ſuch as *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, &c. † ſome of which interpreted it, (as St. *Jerom* ſaith) and ſay that St. *John* wrote it when in *Patmos*. But I ſhall refer our Author for the reſt to *Grotius* and *Sandius*; the latter of which charges them with Blaſphemy that would attribute it to *Cerinthus*.

† *Iren. l. 4. c. 37. & 50. Euſeb. l. 5. c. 8. Tertull. adverſ. Marcion. c. 4. Hieron. Script. Eccleſ. Origen. Homil. In principio.*

Laſtly, ſaith our Author, The Revelation was *as* the Work of *Cerinthus*, *wrote againſt by divers Learned men of the Catholick Perſuaſion.*

A. Dionyſius Alexandrinus was of the number of thoſe that queſtioned whether St. *John* the Evangeliſt were the Author; and for this indeed he offers ſeveral Reaſons, but of ſo little force, that if our Author hath ſeen them, as he has not ſo he could not have the confidence to propoſe them in behalf of his *Ancient Unitarians*. But whatever that Father thought of the Author, he allowed the Book to be Divine.

There were indeed *ſome* others of the *Catholick Perſuaſion*, that *Dionyſius* ſpoke of in the ſame Book, (as *Euſebius* Eccleſ. Hiſt. *lib.* 5. *cap.* 24. relates) that would have the *Apocalypſe* wrote by *Cerinthus*; but they were few, and ſuch as were troubled with a ſort of *Millenaries*, Followers of *Nepos* an *Egyptian* Biſhop, (of Repute for his Learning, Faith, and Knowledge of the Scripture) who for their Opinion quoted the *Apocalypſe*. And it ſeems, as the *Ancient Unitarians* rejected St. *John*'s Writings, becauſe they favour'd the Divinity of our Saviour; ſo thoſe (otherwiſe Orthodox) would, it's likely, have rejected the

the *Apocalypſe*, becauſe it favoured (as they thought) the Cauſe of the *Millennium*.

Upon the whole it appears, That it was the current Opinion and general Tradition, that St. *John*, and not *Cerinthus*, was the Author of the Works attributed to that Evangeliſt.

Object. 2. They objected, he ſaith, 'That this Goſpel is wholly made uſe of by the *Cerinthians* and *Valentinians*, the two chief Sects of the *Gnoſticks*, and for this he quotes *Irenæus*, as well as *Epiphanins*.

A. What is this brought to prove? Will it prove *Cerinthus* to be the Author of that Goſpel? Then it may as well prove *Valentinus* to be the Author of it, as *Cerinthus*, ſince the *Valentinians wholly made uſe of it*, as well as the *Cerinthians*.

Or will it prove that the Goſpel is a *Valentinian*, a *Cerinthian*, or *Gnoſtick* Goſpel? Then ſo would the other Scriptures be ſuch as the Sects were that quoted them, that *corrupted* and *wreſted* them, to ſerve their purpoſe. And thus *Irenæus* tells us the *Gnoſticks* did, as he gives Inſtances enough, *Hær. l.* 1. *c.* 15, 16, 17. Nay, *Cerinthus* himſelf owned the Goſpel of St. *Matthew*, at leaſt part of it; will it therefore follow that the Doctrine of *Cerinthus* was favoured in that Goſpel, or might be proved from it?

Ephiphan. Hær. 28.5. *Philaſtrius Hær.*

But his *Grace* ſaith, This Goſpel was *wrote againſt Cerinthus*; and then, ſaith our Author, how came the *Cerinthians* to uſe it?

A. They uſed it as the other Hereticks uſed that and other Scriptures. And *Irenæus* applies this to another purpoſe; for, ſaith he, *By this means they give Teſtimony to us.*

And this they might ſo much the rather do, as the Evangeliſt makes uſe of ſeveral Terms of theirs (as his *Grace* and *Grotius* have ſhewed) ſuch as *Life*, *Light*, *Fulneſs*, which the Followers of *Cerinthus* (who were willing to catch at any thing, as appears from *Irenæus*) finding there, would challenge for theirs; and this our Author himſelf intimates, when he thus expounds *Irenæus*, That *they*, the Gnoſticks, *greedily uſed this Goſpel as a Proof of their* Eons.

Object.

Object. 3. 'The other Three Evangeliſts ſuppoſe all along that our Saviour Preached but one year, and therefore they reckon but one Paſſover; but (the pretended) St. *John* counts Three years, and Three Paſſovers; *Which*, ſaith our Author, *ſeems to me an unaccountable contradiction; and yet it is granted on all hands, ſome finding a 4th year and Paſſover.*

Anſw. It is *an unaccountable Contradiction* indeed, if the other Three Evangeliſts had ſaid, that our Saviour Preached but one Year, and that there was but one Paſſover, when St. *John* ſaith there were three Paſſovers, and conſequently three years, or thereabouts. But the queſtion is, whether the three Evangeliſts gave any ſuch account; I am certain they do not. And if one will but conſider the occurrences in the time of our Saviour's Preaching, as it's impoſſible (morally ſpeaking) it ſhould all be done in one years time; ſo he that will but conſider the way of computation, as *Epiphanius* hath done *Hær.* 51. 22. will ſee that what St. *John* ſaith muſt needs be true.

But what then will become of the other Evangeliſts? Muſt they be excluded out of the number of the Canonical? No ſurely. But we are to conſider when each Evangeliſt begins, and what he takes in hand to purſue, of which *Epiphanius* gives a very good account. *Hær.* 51. 5, 6.

And if we take this courſe, we ſhall find the latter Evangeliſts often to ſupply the Omiſſions of the preceding. And ſo St. *John*, who lived the longeſt, and wrote laſt of them, doth in the Caſe before us, and diſtributes the time of our Saviour's Miniſtry into Annals, or Paſſovers, after the *Jewiſh* way of Computation, beginning his Account from our Saviour's Baptiſm, and connecting it to *John* the Baptiſt's Impriſonment (where the other Evangeliſts begin) by which means the Hiſtory is made compleat, and the Evangeliſts are found to agree, as *Euſebius*, and St. *Jerom* obſerve. The Omiſſion of which, by the other Evangeliſts, makes it no more a Contradiction, than when St. *Matthew* begins the Genealogy of our Saviour with *Abraham*, St. *Luke* carries it to *Adam*, and St. *John* makes him to exiſt before the World. Omiſſions are no Contradictions, and ſuch as theſe no *unaccountable* Omiſſions. And as for that ſingle Paſſeover, the other three ſpeak of, it was not, as that was a Chronological Character of Time, circumſcribing the whole ſpace of our Saviour's Miniſtry; but a remarkable Point, denoting the ſpecial Seaſon he ſuffer'd in, with *V. Wolzogen in loc.*

relation to the great Type under the Law, and for which he is ſometime called *our Paſſover*. This, I ſay, no more deſcribes the compleat Time of his Miniſtry, than it will follow that becauſe *Pontius Pilate* was then ſaid to be Governor of *Judea*, that he was Governor but one Year only.

Object. 4. 'The other Evangeliſts agree, that immediately after his Baptiſm our Lord was led into the Wilderneſs to be tempted Forty days. But *Cerinthus*, who knew not the Series or Order of our Saviour's Life and Miracles, ſays in the Goſpel, which he has, ſay they, [*viz.* the Ancient *Unitarians*] forged for St. *John*, that the next day after his Baptiſm, our Saviour ſpake with *Andrew* and *Peter*, and the day after went to *Galilee*, and on the third was at a Wedding in *Cana*, and after this departed with his Mother and Brethren to *Capernaum*, where he abode ſome time.

A. Our Author ſaith, *The next day after our Saviour's Baptiſm, he ſpake with* Andrew, *&c.*

I anſwer, 1. There is no mention at all of our Saviour's Baptiſm in that Chapter, but the Hiſtory of that being particularly relalated by the other Evangeliſts, St. *John* ſuppoſes it, and refers to it, V. 15. *John bare witneſs—This is he of whom I ſpake*, that is, formerly; and when that was, St. *Matthew* 3. 11. ſhews, which was juſt before his Baptiſm.

2. Accordingly, all the way there is an obſervable difference of Phraſe between St. *John* and the other Evangeliſts. *Matthew* ſaith, He it is that *cometh after me*, that is, he that is to come. St. *John* ſaith, Ver. 26. *There ſtandeth one among you, he it is that coming after me*, [as I have ſaid.] So ver. 29. *John ſeeth Jeſus coming*;——he ſpake of him, as one then known to himſelf, but that was not till his Baptiſm, *ver.* 33. So again, *ver.* 30. *This is he, of whom I ſaid*, [formerly] Ver. 32, 34. *John bare record, ſaying, I ſaw the ſpirit,—and it abode upon him.* The Phraſes, *ſaid, ſaw, bare record, abode*, do ſhew that it was a certain time paſt, which he refers to. From whence it appears, (1.) That the Phraſe, *the next day*, has no reference to our Saviour's Baptiſm (for that St. *John* is not relating) but to the Diſcourſe then in hand; as the ſame Phraſe, *Ver.* 29. had.

(2.) That there was a diſtance of time between our Saviour's Baptiſm, and that time that *John* the Baptiſt had the Diſcourſe with

with the *Pharisees* at *Bethabara*, *ver.* 19, 24, 28. which was the day before he met *Andrew*, *ver.* 35.

3. It's not at all unreasonable to suppose, That our Saviour's Temptation in the Wilderness, *&c.* did fall in with that time; for after his Baptism he immediately went into the Wilderness, *Mark* 1. 12. And *John* the Baptist may well be supposed to have spent that time in Preaching and Baptizing near to *Jordan*, and in the parts adjoyning to it; all which St. *John* omits, as having been before recorded by the other Evangelists, as well as our Saviour's Baptism.

But the Learned Reader may consult *Epiphanius*, *Hær.* 51. 13, *&c.* and *Petavius*'s Notes upon it. And I will refer our Author to *Schlictingius*'s Note on *John* 1. 26.

Object. 5. 'He has feigned an Epistle, as from St. *John*, to the Bishop and Church of *Thyatira*, *&c.* But it's certain and notorious, say the *Unitarians*, that there was no Church at *Thyatira*, till a long time after St. *John*'s Death. 'Tis a very ridiculous Answer made to this by *Epiphanius*, who being sensible (because he was of *Asia*) of the truth of this Objection, is forced to be content with this vain Elusion, that St. *John* writes Prophetically of this Church.

A. 1. It's far from being certain, that there was no Church, and if St. *John* be of any Authority, it's as certain there was a Church there, as in the other Six Cities, for it's in the same Stile; and it may be as well said, there was no Church at *Ephesus*, as at *Thyatira*, if the way of writing is to be regarded.

2. It's not probable that there should be no Church there, when Churches were planted all about; and that it's granted all the other Six were Churches then in being.

3. If I understand *Epiphanius*, he is far from granting it: All that he saith, is,

(1.) 'Supposing it to be so*, what will follow? why, 'These 'very Persons are forced from the things which they object against 'it, by their own Confession, to assent to the truth; that St. *John* 'foretold things to come by Divine Inspiration, concerning the 'Corruption of that Church, and those false Prophetesses that 'should arise in it Ninety three Years after our Lord's Ascen-'sion.

* ἐὰν γὰρ εἴπωσιν. *which the Latin Translator has not reached.*

(2.) He positively saith, There was a Church there in St. *John*'s time; for saith he, 'St. *John* foresaw that after the time of the

'Apoſtles, and of St. *John*, the Church would fall from the 'truth into Error, even that of the *Cataphryges*, of which 'were the pretended Propheteſſes, *Priſcilla*, *Maximilla*, and *Quin-'tilla*.

So again, 'He wrote by Prophecy to thoſe Chriſtians, that 'then were there in *Thyatira*, that a Woman, who would call 'her ſelf a Propheteſs, ſhould ariſe among them.

So that our Author is as wide of the Senſe of *Epiphanius*, as his *Unitarians* were of the Truth, that would ſo many years after affirm there was no Church at *Thyatira* in St. *John*'s time. I ſuppoſe our Author took it up at the ſecond hand; for I perceive *Pererius*, and perhaps others, miſtook *Epiphanius*.

It ſeems that the Church there had been either deſtroyed by Perſecution, or corrupted by the *Cataphryges*, out of which Condition it having recovered a Hundred and twelve years after, (as *Epiphanius* ſaith) the *Alogi* ignorantly concluded there never had been a Church there till that time; or however, made uſe of this pretence to countenance their impious Deſign of overthrowing the Authority of that Book: A deſign that our Author hath ſhewed himſelf too great a well-wiſher to, by ſo formal a Repetition of thoſe ſorry, and ſo often baffled Objections; and by adding what force he (under the name of the *Ancient Unitarians*) could to ſupport them. Which brings into my mind an unhappy paſſage in *Serm.* 2. of the Archbiſhop, concerning the Doctrine of *Socinus*, and his uncoucht way of managing of it. 'It was only to ſerve and ſupport an Opinion which 'he had entertained before, and therefore was reſolved one way 'or other to bring the Scripture to comply with it: And if he 'could not have done it, it is greatly to be fear'd, that he would 'at laſt have called in queſtion the Divine Authority of St. *John*'s 'Goſpel, rather than have quitted his Opinion.

It was evidently ſo in the Caſe of the *Alogi* or *Ancient Unitarians*; and what doth our Author want of it, that thus rakes into the Dirt of that Generation, and would have them the beſt part of the Chriſtian Church? But that remains to be conſider'd.

II. Who are the *Ancient Unitarians*, that our Author at all times ſpeaks ſo venerably of, and that thus rejected the Books uſually aſcribed to St. *John*?

This

This name of the *Unitarians* and *Ancient Unitarians*, is a Title much made use of, of late; and it is a term of Latitude, that to those that know not the difference, adds much to the number; for under that, they would comprehend all that deny a Trinity, or think not alike of it with the Catholick Church, whether *Arians*, or *Photinians* and *Socinians*; though at the same time they disagree, as well among themselves, (as I shall shew) as with us, and particularly in the point in question, *viz.* the Authority of St. *John*'s Gospel, *&c.* Our Author often speaks of the *Ancient Unitarians*; and if we would know how ancient they are, he tells us, they were *Contemporaries to the first Fathers of the Church, and were older than any of those Fathers whose works are now extant*, p. 50. that is, St. *Clemens* himself *contemporary* to St. *Paul*.

Now whom should we so soon fix upon for his *Ancient Unitarians*, as *Cerinthus* and *Ebion*, for they were *Ancient*, as Contemporaries with the First Fathers of the Church; and were both of them *Unitarians*, as they both held that our Saviour was a *meer Man?* But here our Author interposes, and because he *confesses he has met with these two names in the Church History*; and when he did, to be sure finds no passable Character of them; therefore he will not have *Ebion* a Person, nor *Cerinthus* a *Unitarian*; and for the proof of the latter, offers no Testimony (the way for proving matter of Fact) but an Argument of his own; *For*, saith he, *if Cerinthus held the Unity of God, and denied the Divinity and Pre-existence of our Saviour (as his Grace and the Moderns suppose) neither it should seem, would the Unitarians have reckoned him a Heretick, nor have rejected the Books which they supposed to be his; namely, the Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation, now attributed to* St. John. As if a Person might not be Orthodox in one Point, and Heretical in others; and the *Unitarians* might not reckon *Cerinthus* a Heretick (who held *Jesus* was not born of a Virgin, but was the real Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, and that Christ descended upon Jesus after his Baptism, and leaving him again, returned to Heaven; and so it was Jesus, and not Christ that died; with more of these whimsical dreams) though he agreed with them in denying the Divinity and Pre-existence of our Saviour. The matter of Fact is beyond all contradiction, that *Cerinthus* was a *Unitarian*, as Church-History would have informed any smatterer in it, (as *Irenæus*, *Eusebius*, *Epiphanius*, &c. abundantly testify) but it is his own Argument that is, in his Pharse, *obscure* and *puzzling*.

But

But he is not so willing to part with *Ebion*, the name I mean, and will have it *given by some to the first Christians, because of their Poverty*; and then because the *Ebionites* were *Unitarians* in one sense, therefore they must be Hereticks in none. But herein he is as unsuccessful as in his former attempt; for besides their agreement with the *Unitarians* in denial of Christ's Divinity, they held the Observation of the Law of *Moses* necessary, were Circumcised, and rejected St. *Paul* as an Apostate, *&c.*

Both of these then must be *Unitarians*, and Ancient *Unitarians*; but then comes a *very obscure and puzzling* part of his *History*; For whatever *Cerinthus* himself thought, yet our Author tells us, that *the Gospel of St.* John *was wholly made use of by the* Cerinthians, his Followers. And then though these were *Unitarians*, yet being not of the number of those that wholly rejected St. *John*'s Writings, we are much at a loss to find out those of them that were *Older than any of those Fathers whose Works are now extant.* I doubt we must come a step lower, and from being *Older than those Fathers of the Church, whose Works are now extant*, they will prove at the most Contemporaries with, if not after several of them, about the close of the 2*d.* Century, as is computed. Our Author himself points to them, and they were the *Alogi*, so termed by *Epiphanius*, because they denied Christ to be the λόγος, the *Word*, and the Son of God; and would have him a meer man. But now though these are *Unitarians*, and the most like to the *Socinians* of all the Ancient *Unitarians*, if not the only ones that are so (as *Sandius* would have it, *p.* 146, 147, *&c.*) Though they agree with his Character again, that they rejected all the Works commonly ascribed to St. *John*; yet they seem to be the only *Unitarians* that did anciently agree in disowning the Authority of all those Books; and then it will follow, that the *Unitarians* were not more *Ancient* than those *Fathers, whose Works are now extant*; though he saith, *it is certain and confess'd by them all, that the Ancient* Unitarians, *from the Apostolick times to the Nicene Council, or thereabouts, did reject them.* So that I see no remedy, but if he will be positive in it, that he must be contented to let the *Cerinthians* as well as the *Ebionites*, pass for *Unitarians*, to make his Sect thus ancient as the Apostolick times: But how he will do to find out those that did thus professedly reject all those Writings of St. *John* before

before them, and from the Apoſtolick times to them; and yet were older than ſuch *Fathers of the Church*, as *Clemens Romanus*, *Polycarp*, *Ignatius*, &c. ſome of whoſe Works are *now extant*; I muſt leave to his Conſideration.

Thus much ſhall ſuffice to have ſaid about the Authority of St. *John*'s Writings, and particularly of his Goſpel. But there is another Point yet to be debated; which is,

III. To conſider what was the occaſion upon which St. *John* Wrote his Goſpel. This is one of the firſt things his *Grace* doth take into Conſideration; as the knowledge of this *ſeem'd* to him to be the *only true key to the Interpretation of this Diſcourſe of* St. *John*, and the neglect of which was one of the grounds of *Socinus* s *great and fatal miſtake*, as he ſaith.

How! *Socinus* miſtake! rather let St. *John*'s Goſpel, and all his other Works, labour and ſink under the Exceptions of the *Ancient Unitarians*; and lye by the walls till the world can give a *good Anſwer* to them. Rather let St. *John* take up words by *chance* (as our Author ſaith, *p.* 49.) and uſe the words *Life*, *Fulneſs*, *Only begotten*, as they came in his way, without any deſign, than the great *Socinus* ſhould be blamed. St. *John*, indeed, may be ſaid to uſe words by *chance*; but *Socinus*, *formed*, and *thought*, and *concluded*, and *underſtood*; and acccording as he *formed*, and *thought*, and *concluded*, ſo it *muſt be meant*. He was the man that *ſaw plainly*, (as he words it again, p. 48.) And if his *Grace*, in Vindication of St. *John*, and in compliance with the Ancient Hiſtorians, will adventure to Interpret him from the occaſion of his Writing, he deſerves to be treated with contempt. The *Serene Republick owns none of theſe Titles*, *Biſhop and Archbiſhop*, &c. Thus ſcoffingly and boyiſhly doth he introduce this ſerious Argument. 'O fie! ſays his *Grace*, 'How ſtrangely has this man [*Socinus*] miſtook for want of the 'Light of Ancient Hiſtory! thus he Interprets Scripture by Scri-'pture, and by Reaſon and Wit, not by the Fathers and the 'old Hiſtorians of the Churches Party, *&c.* I could find in my heart to Tranſcribe what his *Grace* has Wrote upon this caſe; his words are theſe: 'It was the great and fatal miſtake 'of *Socinus*, to go to Interpret Scripture merely by Criticiſing 'upon words, and ſearching into all the Senſes that they are ca-'pable of, till he can find one, though never ſo forced and

'foreign

'foreign, that will ſave harmleſs the Opinion which he was 'reſolved beforehand to maintain, even againſt the moſt natural 'and obvious Senſe of the Text which he undertakes to inter-'pret. Juſt as if a man ſhould interpret Ancient Statutes and 'Records, by mere critical Skill in words, without regard to 'the true occaſion upon which they were made, and without any 'manner of knowledge and inſight into the Hiſtory of the Age 'in which they were written, *p.* 18.

And that this was the way *Socinus* took, our Author's own account of it will manifeſt, *p.*48. where he chalks out the method his great Maſter obſerved in interpreting that Evangeliſt, and that is, by laying down certain Propoſitions, which he reſolved to accommodate all to; ſuch was the *Unity of God:* and therefore, ſaith he, when the *Word* is called *God*, it *Muſt be meant in a Senſe of Office:* And whereas it is ſaid, *all things were made by him*; thoſe things *Muſt be the Spiritual World*, &c. And then farewell Fathers, and Hiſtorians, Occaſions, and Scripture too, rather than the *Reaſon* and *Wit* of *Socinus* be called in queſtion.

Well, but ſuppoſing that our Author is content to have the Hiſtorical Occaſion of St. *John*'s Writing inquired into; yet, as for that aſſign'd by his *Grace*, it was, he ſaith, *below the Gravity of the Apoſtle to confute the Wild Gnoſticks*, &c. And if you will take his word for it, he adds, 'I am of opinion, That there is 'no Hiſtorian (I am ſure there is no Ancient Hiſtorian) who 'aſſigns that Hiſtorical Occaſion of St. *John*'s Writings, even 'the *Gnoſticks* and their *Eons*, mentioned by his *Grace*. In ſhort, 'he hath not very juſtly blamed *Socinus*, for not knowing an 'Hiſtorical Occaſion, which is mentioned in no Hiſtorian, *p.* 49.

This is very poſitive, *no Hiſtorian*, *no Ancient Hiſtorian*, and *mentioned in no Hiſtorian.*

We have gained before (if it be worth the while to prove it) that *Cerinthus* and *Ebion* (ſuppoſing him for the preſent a Perſon) did deny the Divinity of our Saviour, according as his *Grace* repreſented it.

The next thing is to ſhew, That theſe their Opinions was an occaſion which St. *John* took for the writing his Goſpel, in the Judgment of the Ancient Hiſtorians, and Fathers of the Church.

Here our Author interpoſes, and ſaith, the account given of this matter by the Ancients, is *very different from this of his Grace.*

For

For they ſay, according to our Author's antique Tranſlation, 'That the other Evangeliſts having committed to writing only the Geſts of our Saviour, during one Years ſpace: Therefore the Apoſtle *John*, being thereto requeſted, declared in a Goſpel according to him, the time that was paſſed over by the other Evangeliſts, and what was done by our Saviour therein *.

* *Euſeb. l.* 3. *c.* 24.

It is very true, That the one of theſe is different from the other; but tho they are different, they are not contradictory and inconſiſtent. For then, not only the Archbiſhop would contradict himſelf, who elſewhere gives the ſame account, and tells us from *Euſebius*, 'That St *John* wrote his Goſpel laſt, and that 'on purpoſe to ſupply the Omiſſions of the other Evangeliſts †; but the Fathers alſo would contradict one another, and often themſelves; who ſometimes give the one, and ſometimes the other, and ſometimes both as the reaſons of St. *John*'s writing, (as I ſhall preſently ſhew). By which way of arguing, *Epiphanius*, *Euſebius*, and St. *Jerome*, &c. will claſh one with another; when the firſt of theſe ſaith, St. *John* wrote his Goſpel * by the impulſe of the Holy Ghoſt; and the other ſays, it was at the inſtance of the *Aſian* Biſhops. But now, as theſe two may well be accommodated, and are conſiſtent; ſo it is in the Account given by the Ancients of the occaſion of St. *John*'s writing the Goſpel; therefore St. *Jerom* † joyns them together, and after he had ſaid, That St. *John* wrote it in Confutation of *Cerinthus*, and other Hereticks; adds, there is alſo *another Cauſe*, and then falls in with *Euſebius*.

† *Serm.* 2. *p.* 94.

* *Hær.* 51. 12.

† *Script. Eccleſ.*

So *Irenæus* expreſly *. So *Epiphanius*.

* *Adverſ. Hær. l.* 3. *c.* 11. *v. Epiphan. Hær.* 51. 2, 12, 13.

And thus *Sandius* doth acknowledg, That againſt the Hereſy of *Cerinthus* and *Ebion*, St. *John* (as we have it by Tradition) wrote his Goſpel.

Thus far then we are ſafe, and have the ſuffrage of Antiquity on our ſide, that St. *John* wrote his Goſpel againſt the Hereſies of *Cerinthus* and *Ebion*. And indeed, by our Author's reply to this part, we may gueſs, That when he *met with theſe two Names in the Church-Hiſtory*, he met with nothing againſt it. For thus he goes on.

Firſt, As to *Ebion*, concerning him, *It is*, ſaith he, *doubted by the Criticks, whether there was any ſuch Man*: Nay, a little after, he is got above the Criticks, and poſitively affirms, That *Ebion*

never was. Now, ſuppposing his *Modern Oppoſers*, and among them the Archbiſhop, for want of conſulting the Indexes of *Names in Church Hiſtory*, had miſtaken; yet, how will that confute his *Modern Oppoſers*, who uſe to quote *Irenæus*, *Epiphanius*, &c. for their Aſſertion, that St. *John* wrote againſt the *Ebionites*? For tho *Ebion* never was, yet the *Ebionites* were an early Sect, and as early as they make him.

But ſaith he, *This Name was given to the firſt Chriſtians, becauſe of their Poverty*, according to the ſignification of the word.

A. Then indeed St. *John* was in the wrong for writing againſt theſe *firſt Chriſtians*, whom St. *Paul* refers to, as our Author would have us underſtand, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. or at leaſt, all thoſe Fathers were miſtaken that would have St. *John* write againſt the Hereſy of the *Ebionites*, or that reckon that among the number of Hereſies. For what Hereſy is there in ſimple Poverty?

But if they that would have the name an Appellative, ſay it was not becauſe of their Poverty, but becauſe they thought, πωχῶς καὶ πατπινῶς, *poorly* and *meanly* of our Saviour, as they would have him the Son of *Joſeph* and *Mary*, as ſome of them; or of *Mary*, as others; but all of them agreeing that he was a mere Man. So *Euſebius*. What if *Ebion* at laſt is found to be a Perſon? So it's affirmed by *Tertullian*, *Præſcript. c.* 33, *&c. Hieron. in Iſai. c.* 1, *&* 3. *Hilarius Epiſt. de Trin. l.* 7. *Origen in Matth.* 5, *&c.*

Hær. 30. So *Epiphanius* expreſly, *Ebionites* were ſo called from *Ebion*; whoſe Followers, ſaith he, would be ſo called from their being poor like the Apoſtles: But, ſaith that Father, *This is a Fiction of their own*; *For* Ebion *was a proper Name.*

As for *Cerinthus*, all that he has to ſay, is, That the Goſpel of St. *John* could not be wrote againſt *Cerinthus*, becauſe *Cerinthus* was ſaid to be Author of it. But this is to reaſon about matter of Fact. It's plain, the *Ancients*, to whom our Author appeals, did aſſert, That it was written againſt *Cerinthus*; and it's as plain, That *Cerinthus* held theſe Opinions, againſt which St. *John* is ſuppoſed by them to have written. To which he has nothing to reply, but that *Cerinthus* is ſaid to be the Author of it; but that I have already conſider'd before. Thus far then, I hope, 'tis pretty evident, That there are *Hiſtorians* and *Ancient Hiſtorians*, that do *aſſign the ſame Hiſtorical Occaſion of St.* John's *Writings, as is aſſigned by his* Grace.

But

But it's likely he will reply, That these words of his, *no Historian*, and *to be sure no Ancient Historian ever assigns that occasion mentioned by his* Grace, are to be limited to the *Gnosticks*. Whatever he may say, yet I doubt few Readers will suppose it; for he has so artificially mingled all these together, that what he affirms may be applied to all; and yet, if examined, he can restrain it to this or that particular. And therefore, that I may shew how little he is acquainted with this Argument, or how little he consults Truth and Candor in it, I shall consider it with respect to the *Gnosticks*.

He cannot deny, but that the Terms, *Word*, *Light*, *Fulness*, *Only Begotten*, are the Phraseology of the *Gnosticks*, or else he must never have read *Irenæus*; which also are used by St. *John*. Now the question will be, Whether St. *John* hath *used them by chance*, as our Author imagines? Or that in Opposition to these Dreams, St. *John* shews all these Titles did truly belong to our Saviour, and to which there is a *Perpetual Allusion*, as his *Grace* affirms. I verily believe, That if a *Gnostick* had accidentally light upon that Chapter, as the *Platonick Amelius* is said to have done, he would no less have been convinced there was this Allusion to their Hypothesis, than that Philosopher was that the Evangelist did Platonize. Hence it was, That the following *Gnosticks* would have confirmed their *Conjugations* and *Eons* from thence. *Iren. l. 1. c. 1. l. 3. c. 11.*

But saith he, It was *below the gravity of the Apostle to confute the wild Gnosticks, and their Chimerical Eons.*

Why so? When this Sect so far prevailed, That *during the Lives of the Apostles, it grew to a great height, to the great Prejudice and Disturbance of the Christian Religion*, as his *Grace* observes; for whose Purity and Preservation it became even this great Evangelist to be concerned. And tho our Sage Philosopher may call them, *Chimæra's* and *Sickly Dreams*, (as in truth they were) and so too trivial a Subject for the Apostolical Pen to write of; yet, when we consider how far those Heresies spread, how long they continued, and what mischief they did (as may be seen in *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, &c.) we may agree to what *Epiphanius* saith upon this occasion. *Neither*, saith he, *let any one contemn these Dogmata, as full of folly; for foolish People are perswaded by foolish things. Nay, prudent Persons may decline from the right way, if the mind be not exercised in the way of truth*; as that *Hær. 27. 7.*

Adv. Hær. l. 26. c. 17. Father gives an instance of himself, when likely to be perverted by the *Gnosticks*.

But lastly, saith our Author, *I am of opinion, that there is no Historian, I am sure no Ancient Historian, who assigns the Historical Occasion of St.* John's *Writings, even the* Gnosticks *and their* Eons, *mentioned by his* Grace.

I answer, That what has been before said is sufficient, when there is a *Perpetual Allusion* to the Phrase and Opinions of the *Gnosticks*; and very often in the Apostolical Epistles, as has been observed by many Learned Persons.

But to put this past dispute, besides what is elsewhere, let our Author turn to *Irenæus*, and he will find that Ancient Au-*Adv. Hær. l. 3. c. 11.* thor expressly affirming, That St *John* wrote his Gospel against the Error of *Cerinthus*; and a little after, that St. *John* took away all ground of Dissention; and by the words, *the World was made by him*, he confuted the *Gnosticks*. So that if our Author was of that *Opinion*, it was without any ground.

IV. It's high time we now proceed to enquire into the sense of St. *John*. The *Ancient Unitarians* finding (as I have observed) the Gospel of St. *John* not reconcilable to their opinion of Christ's being a *meer man*; like *Alexander*, at once cut the Gordian knot, which they could not fairly untie; and rejected *this* and *other pieces* now attributed to that Evangelist, as Uncanonical and Heretical. But an after-generation (whom our Author dignifies also with the same title of *Ancient Unitarians*) more wary than the former, seeing that Author, whoever he was, to *grow into credit among the other denominations of Christians, were careful to shew them, that it was capable of a very allowable sense*, as our Author saith, *p.* 53. *a.*

And this seems to be the case of *Socinus* and this his Defender, who must not quit St. *John*, and with the *Ancient Unitarians*, call his Gospel the *Fiction and Forgery* of *Cerinthus*, (as our Author saith they did) for it has been too long in credit with the *other denominations of Christians*, to admit of such despiteful usage and violence: and therefore they will undertake to shew them it's capable of a *very allowable sense*; but by such *pitiful and wretched shifts*, by such *precarious and arbitrary suppositions*, (as his *Grace* rightly terms them) and an *invention which no indifferent Reader of St.* John, *that had not been prepossessed and biass'd by some violent prejudice, would ever have thought of*, p. 58, 65, &c.

And

And this will appear, if we try it by any of those ways by which the sense of an Author is to be obtained; such as the Occasion, the Phraseology, the Scope, Design and Context.

As for the Occasion, if the Authors alledged above, are of any Authority, it's so far unquestionable.

As for the Phraseology, that is to be understood by the common use of the Words, or the Subject, or Science they relate to; and accordingly were these Phrases in St. *John* applied in their proper and ordinary signification, *as not only the Orthodox Christians, but even the* Arians, *and* Amelius *the Platonist did understand them*, (as his *Grace* observes from *Eusebius*) and our Author is forced to confess as much; for in the account he gives of the *Historical occasion* (*viz.* of *Socinus*'s new Project) he thus introduces it, '*Socinus* finding it to be the first of all God's Declara-'tions, *I am the Lord thy God* &c. he understood *in the beginning*, 'to be *in the beginning of the Gospel state*; and the *Word* was a 'God in *a sense of Office*; and the *World* he made, a *spiritual* '*World*.

Now what is this, but to carry off the words from a plain literal to a figurative sense, and so to acknowledge their Doctrine is not favoured by the Phraseology of it?

But supposing it to be so, yet, saith our Author, '*Socinus* 'observed, that the Scriptures abound with such Metaphors and 'Figures even when they speak of God, as when God is said to 'have Eyes, Arms and Bowels, *&c.* to denote the sight, power 'and mercies of God. *P.* 49. *a.*

It's granted; but withal, as he saith, *the Scriptures therein trust to the judgment of the most common Readers*, and question not *but the most ordinary capacity will so understand them.* But then how comes this to pass, that from the time of St. *John* downwards, not the most common and ordinary, nay, the most accurate Readers, and extraordinary Capacities, were ever so happy as to make this discovery before the fortunate *Socinus?* And why were not they as well able to find out in this discourse of St. *John* the Ministerial Deity of our Saviour, the beginning of the Gospel state, and the spiritual World, (the only Key, it seems, to unlock the sense of that Divine Writer) as they were by the Hands, Eyes and Bowels of God, to understand his Power, Sight and Mercies? It's evident that the most ordinary Capacities did, generally speaking, by these Corporeal Members, understand

derſtand the aboveſaid Attributes of the Deity to be deſcribed. And it is alſo evident that for *Socinus*'s explication of that Evangeliſt, the moſt famed Expoſitors, and much more *common Readers*, no more thought of it, than the Ancient Navigators did dream of that new World, which *Columbus* two Ages ago was ſo happy as to diſcover. So that it evidently appears, that there is not the ſame reaſon to interpret the Phraſes, *In the Beginning*, and *the Word was God*, and *all things were made by Him*, in a metaphorical and figurative ſenſe, as there is for the underſtanding the Corporeal Organs of Speech and Action, *&c.* after that manner, when applied to God: but that rather they muſt be underſtood properly and literally, as the Orthodox, the *Arians*, and all others have underſtood, and his *Grace* has expounded them.

But *hold*, ſaith our Author, 'His *Grace* himſelf, when he comes to interpret the particular expreſſions, can raiſe them no higher than *Arianiſm*, (*viz.* that the Son was generated ſome time before the World) though he alledged them to prove *Trinitarianiſm*. p. 46. *b.*

Well, ſuppoſing this, yet if his Expoſition hold ſo far good; the *Socinian* Hypotheſis, that will not allow our Saviour to have any exiſtence before his Nativity of the Virgin *Mary*, will then be utterly overthrown.

But what doth our Author mean? When he affirms or denies, as he pleaſes, what *Irenæus*, *Euſebius* and *Epiphanius* ſay; they are Books few underſtand, and fewer have: but methinks he ſhould be a little more cautious when he uſes the ſame liberty in a Book publiſhed but the laſt year, and that has the good hap to be generally well received and read. How then can he ſay that his *Grace can raiſe the expreſſions no higher than* Arianiſm? when it's the firſt of his Corollaries, viz. '*The Word here deſcribed by St.* 'John, *is not a Creature.* And then follows, *This Concluſion is* 'directly *againſt the* Arians, *who affirmed that the Son of God was a Creature.* p. 39.

And there is not a branch of thoſe Verſes which the *Archbiſhop* doth not alike interpret. Thus he ſaith of Chriſt the *Word*, that is, *the eternal Son of God.* P. 6. 59.

In the Beginning, that is, *he did exiſt before any thing was made, and conſequently is without Beginning, and eternal.* P. 19, *&c.*

Was God, that is, *from all eternity.* P. 24, *&c.*

But

But perhaps, he will say, this his *Grace* has attempted, but not prov'd.

That remains to be tried by what he has to object against it; and then he only offers somewhat as a Reply to his *Graces*'s Exposition of the Phrase, *In the Beginning*, leaving all the rest that was said in exposition and defence of the other Phrases of the Evangelist, to continue as they were; and if we may judge of what he could have said of the rest, by what he has said of this, it must needs have been very insignificant: For thus he argues.

1. 'In the *Beginning*, is interpreted *without Beginning*, which 'two are distinctly contrary. *P.* 48 *b.*

A. I answer; This is not directly laid down as the interpretation of that Phrase, but is rather the consequence of what his *Grace* had said just before, as the preceding quotation shews, *In the Beginning*, that is, *he did exist before any thing was made, and consequently is without Beginning, and Eternal.*

2. Granting he had thus explain'd the Phrase, *In the Beginning*, to be *without Beginning*, yet they are not *directly contrary*. To have a Beginning, and to be without Beginning, are directly contrary, and more than so, a Contradiction. But to be *in the Beginning*, and to be *without Beginning*, are so far from being contrary, that they are very well consistent, for else God himself would not have been *in the Beginning*. Thus it is, Gen. 1. 1. *In the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth.* By which Phrase is shewed, that the Heaven and Earth had a Beginning, and so were not *in the Beginning*, (for then they had been before they began to be) and so it could not be said, *In the Beginning were the Heavens and the Earth*; for then they had, as God, been without Beginning. But it's said, *In the Beginning God created them*, that is, he that himself had no Beginning, gave a Beginning to them. After this manner doth the Wise-man express it, in the place quoted by his *Grace*, on this occasion, *The Lord possessed me* [Wisdom] *in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*, Prov. 8. 22, 23. So that to Be *in the Beginning*, was to be before his *works of old*; to be *without a Beginning*, and *from Everlasting*.

2. He objects, 'Though he [*Archbishop*] cannot find the 'Coeternity in the words of St. *John*, yet he can interpret how

'ow

'own interpretation of his words, so as to make out the Co-'eternity: For he saith, *in the Beginning*, that is, *the Son already* '*was, when things began to be*; and by Consequence, the Son was 'without a Beginning; for that which was never made, could 'have no Beginning of its Being. And then he smartly returns upon him, 'How, Sir, is that a good Consequence, or any Con-'sequence at all? For supposing the Son was when the World 'began to be, which is not yet Six thousand years ago, will it 'follow, that therefore he was absolutely without a Beginning, 'or was never made? *&c.*

Answ. If his *Grace* had left this Consequence to stand upon its own foot, without offering any proof for it; yet any one but competently acquainted with the Scripture-Phraseology, would not have questioned the reason and force of it; and if not with respect to his Adversary, yet for a *salvo* to his own ignorance, would have forbore his *How, Sir, is that a good Consequence, or any Consequence at all?* But I much question his ignorance; for his cautious Adversary, that had been us'd to write with a due guard as well as strength, took care to prevent this Objection, and fortify his Consequence with the best authority, that of Scripture.

For thus he goes on immediately after the words quoted by this Author, (and so he is the more inexcusable) *The Son already was when things began to be, and consequently is without Beginning*, &c. And so the *Jews* used to describe *Eternity*, *before the world was*, and *before the foundation of the world*, *as also in several places of the New Testament.* And so likewise *Solomon* describes the Eternity of *Wisdom*, *The Lord*, says he, *possessed me in the beginning of his way*, *before his works of old*, &c.

So that if the *Consequence* be not *good*, or if it be no *Consequence at all*, the Scripture is to be blamed, and not his *Grace* for following it in a line of Argumentation. According to the Scripture way of speaking, that which was *before the world*, is accounted eternal: And therefore what was in the Beginning had no Beginning; and so the whole Cause of *Arianism*, that would have Christ to be part of the Creation, though before the world was, must unavoidably miscarry; which was the Case in hand, and what his *Grace* undertook to prove. But this was fit to be conceal'd; for otherwise our Author would have had as little to say to the *Archbishop's* Explication of the Phrase, *In the Beginning*,

as

as he has to the other Phrases of the Evangelist. Therefore he chuses rather to wind off with a bare Repetition or two, to the *Socinian* Hypothesis, to try whether he can with better success encounter his Adversary upon his own Principles, than upon those of the *Arian*. p. 47. *a. b.*

Socinus being a person of a sharp and piercing wit, soon perceived that the *Arian* Scheme was not consistent with St. *John*; for since there was nothing in the world but Creator and Creature, that which was the Creator (as the *Arians* did admit the λόγος, or *Word* to be, and as St. *John*'s words, if literally understood, do import) could not be the Creature. And therefore, either he must, with our Author's *Ancient Unitarians*, forgo St. *John*'s Authority, or find out some other Explication than had yet been thought of; and that constrain'd him to fly to a Ministerial God, and a Spiritual World, as the *Archbishop* had shewed, *Sermon* II.

All that our Author has to say upon the *Socinian* account, is with reference to a double Charge brought against it; and that is, the unreasonableness and the novelty of this Explication.

As to the first of these, *His Grace* saith, *Sermon* II. *p.* 75. 'According to this rate of liberty in Interpreting *Scripture*, it will 'signify very little or nothing, when any Person or Party is 'concerned, to oppose any Doctrine contained in it; and the 'plainest Texts for any Article of Faith, how Fundamental and 'necessary soever, may by the same arts and ways of In'terpretation be eluded and rendred utterly ineffectual for the 'establishing of it. For example, if any man had a mind to 'call in question that Article of the *Creed*, concerning the *Creati*'*on of the World*, why might he not, according to *Socinus* his 'way of Interpreting St. *John*, understand the first Chapter of '*Genesis* concerning the *Beginning* of the *Mosaical* Dispensation; 'and Interpret the *Creation of the Heaven and the Earth*, to be the 'Institution of the *Jewish* Polity and Religion, as by the *New* '*Heavens* and the *New Earth*, they pretend to be understood 'the New state of things under the *Gospel*, &c. It is certain that it was not the Phrase of St. *John* misled *Socinus*, or gave him any occasion for his novel Interpretation, but a pre-conceived Principle (as has been before observed); for indeed the Phrase of St. *John* bears such a conformity to that of the First of *Genesis*, that one seems to be a key to the other; and *in the be-*

ginning God created the Heavens and the Earth, is so like to *in the beginning was the Word,* ——— *and all things were made by him*; that one is naturally led to think that as they in words seem to relate to the same state of things, so that the *Word* that thus was in the beginning, and made all things, was truly God; and that the whole Phraseology of it is as properly and literally to be understood in St. *John*, as in *Genesis*; and that the one can no more admit of a Moral and Allegorical Interpretation, than the other.

This is so pertinently alledged by *His Grace*, and the Parallel so lively represented by the Bishop of *Worcester*, in a Discourse there referred to, that our Author seems perfectly at a loss whether to grant or deny it; and so from admitting the case as it is proposed, would advance another Scheme of it; for thus he saith, 'Let *His Grace* put the case, as it usually is, and I am content to join issue with him upon the instance he hath here given. The first Chapter of St. *John* speaks of a certain Person, namely of the Lord Christ, who is confess'd to have been a Man, and yet it saith of him, *All things were made by him*, ——— So if the first Chapter of *Genesis* imputed the Creation there spoken of to *Moses*; if it said, *In the beginning Moses* Created the Heavens and the Earth, it would be not only absurd, but absolutely necessary, to interpret the Chapter Allegorically and Figuratively; and to say that the Heavens and Earth are the *Jewish* Polity and Religion, the Church and the Discipline thereof, *&c.*

Now this Answer of his contains somewhat absurd, somewhat untrue, and is also besides the case.

1. It contains somewhat absurd, which is, To conceive that it's possible for *Moses* an Inspired Writer, to have delivered himself after that manner; and that when he was to Write of the first Institution of the *Jewish* Polity and Religion, he should thus describe it, *In the beginning Moses created the Heaven and the Earth; and the earth was without form*, &c. *and Moses said, let there be light and there was light*, &c. Aud yet our Author, to salve *Socinus's* wild Interpretation of *St. John*, is contented to grant this; *we*, saith he, *say it, we affirm it, that if the first Chapter of* Genesis *imputed the Creation to* Moses, *it ought to be so interpreted.*

2. It contains somewhat untrue, as when to make out his Parallel, he saith, *The first Chapter of St.* John *speaks of a certain Person*

Person the Lord Christ, who is confessed to have been a man, and yet it saith of him, All things were made by him. For he knows very well, that the Person there spoken of, is not confessed by any of his Adversaries to *have been a Man*, when that is spoken of him, *that all things were made by him.* For then he was the *Logos*, the *Word*, the *only begotten Son of God*; and was not a Man, or *made Flesh*, till about Four thousand Years after the Creation.

3. The Case as he puts it, is not the case put by the Archbishop; which was to this effect, supposing such a one as *Spinosa*, that would have the World not to be Created, but to have been *ab Æterno*, finding the Book of *Genesis* to be in such credit with his Countrymen the *Jews*, and the several *Denominations* of Christians, that it was not to be gainsaid; he is therefore *careful* (as our Author saith some of the *Ancient Unitarians* were in the case of St. *John*'s Gospel) to shew that it is capable of another and an *allowable sence*; and so in order to their satisfaction expounds it, of the *Jewish Polity and Religion*, of *Spiritual Heavens*, and an *Intellectual Light* (in our Author's phrase).

Now the Question upon this is, Whether *Spinosa* might not as speciously thus expound the First of *Genesis* for the advantage of his Hypothesis, as *Socinus* did the First of *John* to serve his design?

And that any one that compares the one with the other, *Genesis* and St. *John*, will be able to discern.

Indeed as absurd as the supposition of his concerning *Moses* is, it might as allowably be said of him, as *Christ* the *Word* have that said of him in St. *John*, if the *Word* was no more than *Moses*, a Ministerial and Temporary God, and had no more been *in the beginning* than *Moses*.

And then the Book of *Genesis* might as well have begun in the same Phrase with *Moses*, as St. *John* with the *Word*; after this manner, 'In the beginning was *Moses*, and *Moses* was with 'God, and *Moses* was God [or a *God*, as he will have it]. The 'same was in the beginning with God. All things were made 'by him, and without him was not any thing made that was 'made. Such pitiful and sorry shifts are those drove to that first resolve upon an Hypothesis, and then are to seek how to maintain and defend it.

The only Point remaining with our Author is, 'That the Evan-'gelist, who was a *Jew*, speaks here of the *Messias*, in the usual Stile

and Language of the *Jews*, who were wont to say, and say it in almost all their Ancient Books, that the *Messias* should make a New World, he should abolish Paganism and Idolatry from among the Nations; and thereby (as the Prophets also speak) Create a New Heaven and a New Earth.

Answ. I acknowledge the Scripture sometimes calls a Political or Moral Change in a Church or People, by the Term of New Heavens and New Earth: But, in our Author's way of speaking, *it trusts to the Reader's Judgment and common sense*, in a matter that it's not well possible for him to doubt in, or to question what are the Heavens and Earth there spoken of, as *Isaiah* 65. 17, 18. 66. 22. 1 *Peter* 3. 13. *&c.*

But here is no intimation given in the Evangelist, that the Phrases should be Translated from a Natural to a Spiritual sence; nor can it possibly be without great violence, as their own Explication of it will shew: For they are forced to understand Christ to be Personally the *Word* in one Clause, and the Gospel to be the *Word* in the other, as *Socinus* doth, *In the beginning was the Word*, Christ; and the *Word*, that is the Gospel, *was with God.* Or for the avoiding of that difficulty, others of them make Christ to ascend Actually, Personally, and Bodily into Heaven before his Ministry (though the Scripture speaks not one word of it) that they may put a colour upon the Phrase; *The Word was with God*, as *His Grace* has shewed *Sermon* II. *p.* 62. of which more anon.

But now if we take the words in their natural and proper sence, there are several other places to confirm it, as *His Grace* has shewed, *p.* 101, *&c.* and which it shall suffice for the present to refer to.

The next thing to be considered is, the Novelty of this Exposition of St. *John* by *Socinus*, of which saith the *Archbishop*, it is *quite to another sense, and such as by their own confession was never mentioned, nor I believe thought of by any Christian Writer whatsoever before him.* Sermon II. *p.* 57. which he more largely prosecutes, *p.* 64, *&c.*

What saith our Author to this?

'Suppose this; Why may we not own that time and long 'consideration do improve all sorts of Sciences, and every part 'of Learning, whether Divine or Humane? I do not think it 'to be any Diminution of *Socinus*, that it may said of him, and

of

'of this Context, he hath rescued it from that Darkness in 'which it long lay.

A. This Observation of his had in reason been prevented, if he had well weighed what his *Grace* had said upon it, who thus pursues his Argument.

1. That the literal Sense was so obvious, that the *Orthodox*, and even the *Arians* and *Platonists* (as *Amelius*) agreed in it. But here our Author, like a flying *Tartar* that dares not in a Pursuit look behind him, throws a spiteful Dart at his Adversary. 'As to Friend *Amelius*, I think it sufficient to say, 'That the Credit of the *Trinitarian* Cause runs very low; when 'an *uncertain Tale* of an *obscure Platonist*, of no Reputation ei-'ther for Learning or Wit, is made to be a good part of the 'Proof that can be alledged for these Doctrines. This is spoke at all adventures; for if he had read *Eusebius* * upon it, he would have found the *Platonist* to have deserv'd a better Character, and neither the Person to be so *obscure*, nor the Relation of it such an *uncertain Tale*, as he would represent it †.

* *Præpar. p.* 540.

† V. *Sandius, p.* 115, 119.

But he that can make *Historical Occasions* out of Propositions, and will prove matter of Fact by reasoning upon it without Authority, may be allowed to make Characters at his pleasure, and stamp what he will upon a Quotation.

Let him however take or refuse *Friend Amelius*, it's a small part of the proof depends upon that *Tale*; the use made of that in concurrence with the Judgment of the *Orthodox* and *Arians*, was, that not one of them ever imagined that there was any other World alluded to in that place, than the Natural and Material World, nor other *Beginning* than that of the Creation.

2. His *Grace* goes on; 'Surely it ought to be very consider-'able in this Case, that the most Ancient Christian Writers, '*Ignatius*, *Justin Martyr*, &c. and even *Origen* himself, are most 'express and positive in this matter, *&c.* And if this Interpre-'tation of *Socinus* be true, it's almost incredible that those who 'lived so very near St. *John*'s time, and were most likely to 'know his meaning, should so widely mistake it. And then that 'the whole Christian World should for so many Ages together 'be deceived in the ground of so important an Article of the 'Faith; and that no man did understand this Passage of St. *John* 'aright before *Socinus*. This very consideration alone, if there 'were

'were no other, were sufficient to stagger any prudent man's 'Belief of this Misrepresentation.

3. And as his *Grace* goes on, 'That which makes the mat-'ter much worse, is, that the *Religion* which was particularly 'design'd to overthrow *Polytheism*, and the belief of more 'Gods, hath according to them been so ill taught and under-'stood by Christians for so many Ages together, and almost 'from the beginning of Christianity, as does necessarily infer a 'plurality of Gods. An inconvenience so great, as no Cause, 'how plausible soever it may otherwise appear, is able to stand 'under the weight of it, *p.* 73. And which the Reader may there 'see admirably enforced.

For which reasons it cannot well be suppos'd, that either *Time* or long *Consideration*, would place a man in so advantagious Circumstances, that he should beat out that Track, which all Christians for 1500 years together, were not able before him to descry: But after all, this shall be no *Diminution to Socinus*, as our Author will have it.

But tho in words he will not allow it a *Diminution*, yet he in Fact betrays it; and after all, is not willing to own the Charge. For thus he argues, 'Why doth his *Grace* say, That not only 'all the Fathers, but all Christians have for this Fifteen Ages, 'agreed in his Interpretation of this Context? Have there been 'no Christians in the World for 1500 Years, but only the *Arians* 'and *Trinitarians?*

This is a little too gross, for he knows full well, that this is not asserted by the Archbishop; therefore he makes another attempt.

'Or was *Socinus* the first (for that (it may be) was his *Grace*'s 'meaning) who departed from the *Arian* and *Trinitarian* Sense 'of the Context?

What an obscure Writer doth he make his *Grace* to be, when he is, as it were, forced to come again and again upon the Enquiry, and at length to conclude with, *it may be it was his meaning?* And yet at last he is so unfortunate as to mistake it.

For his *Grace* doth no more say, That *Socinus was the first man that departed from the* Arian *and* Trinitarian *Sense of the Context*, than he saith, *That not only the Fathers, but all Christians have for Fifteen Ages agreed in it.* For he knew full well, that there

there were *Cerinthians*, and *Ebionites*, and *Photinians*, and others, that went under the General Name of Christians, that differ'd as well from the *Arians* as the *Orthodox*, and would allow our Saviour no other Existence, than he had as the Son of *Mary*, and so could not with consistence to their Principle, expound St. *John*, as the *Orthodox* and *Arians* expounded him. But let his *Grace* speak for himself, *viz.* 'Not only all the Ancient *Fathers* of the *Christian* Church, but, so far as I can find, all Interpreters whatsoever for *Fifteen hundred* years together did 'understand this passage of St. *John* in a quite different Sense, '[from *Socinus*] namely of the Creation of the Material, and 'not of the Renovation of the Moral World.

And however our Author would evade and molify it, his *Grace* had proved it beyond Contradiction by the Confession of his great Oracle *Socinus*, and his Advocate *Schlichtingius*, that own the true Sense of these Words was never before rightly explained *.

And indeed, what our Author himself alledges, is a tacit Confession of it; for he produces nothing from *Paulus* or *Photinus*, or the Ancient *Unitarians*, of the *Word* that was God by Office, or of the beginning of a Gospel State that *Word* did exist in, or of a Spiritual World he made, or of the *Word*'s being with God in the Revelation of the Gospel, or of the Personal *Word*'s being with God before his Ministry to receive that Revelation: But on the contrary, he tells us that according to them, the *Word* was God, as his Generation was Divine, and was *from the beginning with God*, *in God's Decree and Intention*; and that the World was not made *by* him, but *for* him; a quite different Explication from that of *Socinus*.

Thus far then it's evident, That his *Grace* has sufficiently shew'd the Novelty of the *Socinian* Explication of St. *John*'s Gospel. This was a tender point, and what our Author had no mind to touch upon, but something must be said, for else the Cause would have suffer'd, and he had lost the opportunity of shewing his Reading about their Patriarch *Paulus*, and their Metropolitan *Photinus*, (*Titles*, it seems, *owned in their Commonwealth of Learning*) and the *whole Provinces* possessed by their *Followers*, p. 53.

But if our Author is of any Credit, they did not only possess *whole Provinces*, but Ages too, the two first *undoubtedly* (as he suggests).

And

* V. *Archb. Serm.* 2. *p.* 69.

And saith he, 'We are ready to dispute it in the presence of the 'Learned World, that the Fathers mentioned by his *Grace* 'were less of the mind of the *Trinitarians*, than of ours. They 'held the Doctrine that was afterwards called *Arianism*, p. 52. *b.* 54. *a.*

The first false Step he makes, is, That he takes it for granted, that his *Grace* allows the two first Ages of Christianity to be for the *Socinians*, or at least not against them. For, saith he, *if of Seventeen Ages, we have (as we have undoubtedly have) the two first, much good may do his* Grace *with the other Fifteen. He must not deny us the two, nay, the three first, generally speaking.* It seems his *Grace must not*, nor indeed can deny him it he insists only upon the last Fifteen Ages as his *Period*, for then he quits the two first. But now any indifferent Reader will soon see, that when his *Grace* speaks of *Fifteen hundred years*, it's with respect to the Ages intercurrent from the Apostles to the time of *Socinus*, whose Exposition he charges with Novelty. [So *p.* 64, 73, *&c.*] And who lived in the last Century.

The second false Step, is his way of proof, which is this, 'We will [*saith he*] wrest it from all the World, that the Apo- 'stolick Creed, which was the only Creed of the three first 'Ages, is wholly *Unitarian*, and perfectly contradicts that In- 'terpretation of the beginning of St. *John*'s Gospel, which his '*Grace* seeks to advance, *p.* 52.

How that is, we must seek further, *viz. p.* 53. *b.* where he takes it up again. In the Apostles Creed, 'The Lord Christ 'is unconteſtably spoken of, as having no Existence before he 'was generated in the Womb of the Blessed *Mary*, by the Spirit 'of God.

Not to insist upon that, that it was *the only Creed of the three first Ages*, it will require a more than an obstinate Resolution to *wrest* it out of the possession of the *Trinitarians*, who both from the distribution of the Creed under its three General Heads, do assert a Trinity, and from the Character given to our Saviour of being the *only Son of God*, do maintain his Divinity. But for this, being he has offer'd no proof, I shall refer him to Bishop *Pierson* upon that Point, which he has at large explained and defended.

His

3. His next false step is, That whereas his *Grace* particularly names *Ignatius*, *Justin*, *Athenagoras*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and *Origen*, as of the same mind with himself; this Author affirms, That contrariwise they held the *Arian* Doctrine; where yet he fails in his main Point, which was to clear *Socinus*'s Explication, and his Doctrine, from Novelty: But instead of that, all he attempts is to shew that the Ancient Fathers were for the *Arian Doctrine*; which is to say they were not for the *Socinian*: And yet even there he fails again; as has abundantly been proved by Dr. *Bull*; and which I shall look upon as unanswerable, till I see the Book he promises us in Answer to it.

Having all this while been employed in Vindication of the Authority of St. *John*'s Gospel against the Ancient *Unitarians* that questioned it, and our Author that proposes their Arguments; and in Vindication of the Orthodox Exposition of it, against the *Arian* on one side, and the novel one of *Socinus* on the other; I shall now proceed to the Consideration of those Texts of Scripture which the *Archbishop* occasionally made use of for the Explication of St. *John*; and they are, *Heb.* 1. 1. And *Col.* 1. 15.

His *Grace* has alledg'd *Heb.* 1. 2. several times in his Sermons, twice in his First, for the Explication of St. *John*, and *Col.* 1. 16. And thus far our Author goes along with him in the bare quotation; but he manifestly wrongs him, when he thus triumphs as he goes off from the Text; *Would a man build the belief of more gods than one, contrary to the whole current, and most expres's words of the rest of Scripture, on a Text so uncertain as this is?* p. 51. *b.* I say he manifestly wrongs him; for he knows very well, that his *Grace* agrees with the *current and expres's Words of Scripture*, in asserting the Unity of the Godhead; and so could never attempt to *build the Belief of more Gods than one*, upon any Text whatsoever, unless he would contradict himself.

What is it then his *Grace* alledges this Text for? Why, it is to justify St. *John*, when he saith, That *all things were made by the Word*; and consequently the Word that made all things must be God. The Proposition is St. *John*'s, the Consequence is indeed his *Grace*'s, but what will necessarily follow, as he has proved it from *Heb.* 1. 2. I perceive our Author needs to be remembred upon occasion: For tho this is the use his *Grace* makes of that Quotation in *Sermon First*, yet our Author is to know there is a *Second Sermon*, where his *Grace* doth not criticise upon

Words, and shew how they may be expounded this way and that way, and leave it, in our Author's Phrase, an *uncertain Text*; but fully shews, That this Verse, and *Col.* 1. 16. *must necessarily be understood of the old Creation of the Natural World, and not of the Moral World, and the Renovation and Reformation of the Minds and Manners of men by the Gospel.* And this he not only at large confirms, but also gives a particular Answer to the Comment of *Schlichtingius* and *Crellius* upon it; *Sermon* II. p. 103, 106, *&c.* Now our Author in reason should have interposed in the behalf of these his deserted Friends, and have given a just Reply to their Adversary; but his business is rather to propose, and repeat, and make some sudden sallies, than grapple with his Opponent, and come to downright Blows.

The first Adventure he makes is, That the word αἰῶνες, which we render *Worlds*, *more usually and properly signifies Ages*; *and its so translated by St.* Jerom; *and therefore divers of the most Learned Criticks understand this Text of the Gospel Ages*; *of which the Lord Christ is (under God) the undoubted Author.*

A. It seems the *Learned Criticks* go different ways, and our Author dares not lay too much on their side, that *understand this of the Gospel-Ages*; for he saw that the Phrase, *he made the Ages*, was harsh, and as unusual as it is usual for the *Greek* word to signify Ages: And which is worse, that the word *Ages* in the *Jewish* and Scripture-Stile, ordinarily signifying the Age before and the Age under the Messias, it must follow, That the Lord Christ *must be the undoubted Author* of both the Ages; of that from the Foundation of the World to the Gospel, as well as that from the Gospel to the End of the World: And if so, he must have been existent before the Ages; for else how could he be the Author of them? This he that has been so conversant in the *Learned Criticks of the Trinitarians*, cannot be ignorant of: And because I have not a List of them at hand, I shall for the present refer him to Dr. *Hammond* on *Luke* 1. p. *&c.*

Whether he foresaw this or no, I cannot divine; but however, he has another answer in reserve. For thus he goes on;

But, saith he, *let us say αἰῶνας here is* World, *yet* Grotius *gives very good reasons why we ought to render the word thus*, For whom he made the Worlds; *i. e. God made the World for the Messias, or with intention to subject it to him in the fulness of time.*

A. But

A. But ſuppoſing it may be ſo rendred, yet there is no ſuch *ſalvo* for *verſe* 10. where it's ſaid of Chriſt, (as the *Archbiſhop* hath unanſwerably proved) *Thou, Lord, in the beginning haſt laid the foundation of the earth,* &c.

2. The *Greek* Phraſe, δι' ἀυτῦ, is the very ſame with what is uſed, *John* 1. 3. *All things were made by him*; where the ordinary Tranſlation is allowed; and as far as the Phraſe will go, it may as properly be applied to our Saviour, as the efficient, as the final Cauſe, *i. e.* That the World was made *by* him, as *for* him: And that it is here to be underſtood of the former, his *Grace* has ſhew'd.

3. The Apoſtle, *Col.* 1. 16. uſes theſe two diſtinctly, δι' ἀυτῦ *by him*; and εἰς ἀυτὸν, *for him.* But to this our Author has ſomewhat to ſay.

For the Archbiſhop having made uſe of that place of St. *Paul* to confirm what he had before produced out of St. *John*, the Opponent thinks himſelf bound in honour to attack him: But in his uſual way: For whereas his *Grace* had ſpent about twelve Pages in both his Sermons upon the Explication of this Text, and in Anſwer to the moſt conſiderable Objection againſt it; our Author replies, *He urgeth that Text. —He obſerves moreover, That in the foregoing Verſe the Lord Chriſt is called the Firſt-born of every creature. And he ſeeks to prove, I think he has proved it, That Firſt-born here is as much as to ſay Heir or Lord of every creature.* P. 51. *b.*

A. He ſpeaks as coldly, as if he durſt not truſt his Reader with his Adverſary's Arguments, or ſo much as ſuggeſt for what reaſons or upon what grounds the Archbiſhop urged that Text. Only he grants, That when his *Grace* had ſhewed that by Firſt-born was principally meant an Heir, he ſoftly anſwers, *I think he has proved it.* And if he has, he has ſo far wreſted none of the leaſt of the Texts produced both by the *Arians* and *Socinians*, out of their hands. *Archb.* p. 33, 34.

But he goes on, if I may call *omitting* ſo:

'*I will omit, That the greater number of Criticks and more Learned* '*Interpreters, of his Grace's own Party and among them* Athanaſius '*himſelf, tranſlate and interpret that Text, not of real Creating; but of* '*the Modelling of all things.*

A. 1. I hope he will admit thoſe to be Criticks that are in the *Critici Sacri*, or thoſe whom Mr. *Pool* has inſerted into his *Synopſis*; but if we may paſs a judgment upon the *Learned Interpre-*

ters by them, we shall be far from finding a Number, and I believe it will be a Number of one, if he will be so favourable to us as to allow *Grotius* to be one of his *Grace's Party.*

As for *Athanasius*, I had the curiosity to consult him (though it's too hard a Task to put upon his Reader to turn over two Folios to search for a Quotation) but could find no such Explication of the Apostle, as he suggests. But on the contrary, from that place he shews that all things were created by him, and so he could not be a Creature. So in his Ἔκθεσις πίστεως, and his *Synod. Nicenæ Decret.*

A. 2. He saith he will *omit* this, that is, as I thought, give it up; but I find rather it is that he will not be obliged to defend it: He finds the *Archbishop* had made the Point of a *Moral Creation* a little too hot to be maintain'd; but being it's what he himself has a great liking to, he goes on to say all he can say, in hopes his Reader may think as favourably of it as himself. But he comes off as to himself, *as I said, I will not insist on this Concession.*

He therefore comes to another Retrenchment, and that is the Account given of it by St. *Chrysostom* (as he will have it) in the *Opus Imperfectum*, who reads it thus; *For him were all things created.* So saith he, *the Sense is, all things were originally created by God for the Lord Christ; namely, to subject them, in the fulness of time, to him, and his Law.*

A. As for what he saith of the *Opus imperfectum* of St. *Chrysostom*, whoever was the Author of it, it's granted by the Learned that it is not St. *Chrysostom*'s. But let it be whose it will, I am pretty confident that there is no such Exposition of that Phrase in the Book (though it consists of 54 Homilies.) And besides the turning it over, I am confirm'd in it from what is said there, *Homil.* 30. upon that, *Who is my mother*, &c. *I, who before the constitution of the world, created the world, know no such worldly Parents*, &c.

Indeed this Version of δι' αὐτοῦ, *for him*, is merely to serve the Hypothesis that he is advancing. For when he can apply it to a Moral Creation, he admits it, as *John* 1. 2. and so it's necessary to be understood here, *v.* 20. δι' αὐτοῦ, *by him to reconcile all things to himself.*

And accordingly as the Apostle begins, so he ends the Verse with the same Phrase; *By him were all things created*; and as one would think to prevent all cavil, uses Phrases as distinct as the efficient and final

final cause, for so he closes the Verse, *All things were created by him, and for him*; *by him*, as the efficient; and *for him*, as the final cause. But here our Author would fain find out an evasion, and that is by translating εἰς αὐτὸν, *to him*; and then it shall be, *All things were created for his use, and to his service.* And if any one should ask what is the difference? he answers immediatly, that the latter, *to his service*, is exegetical and explanatory of the former, *for his use.* This, he saith, is *probably design'd by the Greek*, and yet he knows how (by a peculiar Rule of Logick) to crowd more into the Conclusion than is in the Premisses, and out of what, in his own opinion, is but *probable*, to infer a *necessity*; for thus he concludes, *the Greek word being probably design'd as exegetical: Therefore the sense of necessity is, for him, and to him*, i. e. *for his use, and to his service.* Just as if I should say, it's probable that he never read the *Opus imperfectum*, that calls it St. *Chrysostom*'s; and therefore it's certain he has not.

To conclude, Tho he would as to this Text fairly, if he can, get rid of this *moral Creation*, and *Athanasian* spiritual *modelling* of things, for a reason he knows; yet he is still within the inchanted Circle; for at the last his *probable* Explication leaves him there; and what was it else when he says, *All things were originally created by God for the Lord Christ, namely, to subject them in the fulness of time to him, and his Laws?* And how doth that differ from the *modelling and changing all things in Heaven and Earth, to a new and better estate? on the Earth, by abolishing Paganism, and Idolatry*, &c. *and in Heaven, Angels and heavenly Powers being put under his direction*, &c. as he tells us in the Column of those things that are *omitted.*

Lastly, It's not *probable* that his is the just Explication of this place, and that for a Reason or two.

1. Because the Apostle discourses this afterwards, *v.* 20. *Having made peace through the blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

For the clearer understanding of which, I shall take liberty to set before the Reader the connexion of a few Verses. The Apostle, *v.* 14. speaking of our Saviour, *in whom we have redemption through his blood*, &c. proceeds to shew who this Redeemer was, and that in a two-fold capacity. First, in respect of his Divine Nature, *who is the image of God, the first-born or heir of the whole creation.*

creation: And then gives the reason of such his preheminence, and why he bestows so great a Title upon him; and that is *v.* 16, 17. *For by him were all things created*, &c. From thence he proceeds to discourse of him as to his Human Nature, and the station he is in, *v.* 18. *And he is the head of the body*, &c. And this done *v.* 20. he returns to the point where he set forth *v.* 14. And accordingly his Lordship's Explication is very easy and natural, *p.* 34. *Who is the image of God, the heir and Lord of the whole creation; for by him all things were created.*

2. This Author's account of this place is not *probable*; for Christ's being the Head over all things, was not till his Death and Resurrection, when his Mediatory Kingdom began; whereas our Author says, *That all things were originally created by God for the Lord Christ*; and without doubt as for *his use and to his service*, so for the advantage of them that were under his government and direction. But what a vast solitude was there, a Chasm of 4000 years before his Birth and Being? and in what a condition was the whole World of Intelligent Beings, till our Saviour's Resurrection and Ascension? What *Service* could he challenge from them, when he himself lay in the *Embrio* of nothing? And what advantage could they have from him that was to come into the world for the Redemption of Mankind 4000, 3000, *&c.* years after? Where was the *Paganism* and *Idolatry* he in that dismal Interval *abolished? Where the Angels and Heavenly Powers that were put under his direction, and by him employed in defence and succor of the faithful?* What was it to those unhappy souls, born so many ages before his time, under the Constellation of Paganism and Idolatry, that some thousands or hundreds of years hence should arise the Lord Christ, who *in the fulness of time* was to be *actually set above all Thrones and Dominions*, &c. and *in whom as in their Head, all things* should be *united and consist?* as our Author words it.

Of

Of the Pre-existence of our Saviour.

THat the *Word* described by St. *John* had an Existence before his Incarnation, and his being born of the Virgin, was a Conclusion his *Grace* inferred from the Phrase, *In the Beginning*. Serm. 1.

This he confirmed by several Texts of Scripture, which he ranked under the two following Heads. *Serm.* 2. *p.* 84.

1. 'Those which expressly assert the Son of God to have 'been, and to have been in Heaven with God, and partaker 'with him in his Glory, before his Incarnation and appearance 'in the World.

2. 'Those which affirm that the World and all Creatures 'were made by him.

Of the first sort are *Joh.* 3. 13. 6. 62. 8. 58. 13. 3. 16. 27. 17. 5. 1 *Joh.* 1. 1. in which it's said of our Saviour, that he came down from Heaven, was with God, was before *Abraham*; that he had a Glory with the Father before the World was.

To those which say our Saviour *was in Heaven*, and *came down from Heaven*, our Author returns some general Answers, (as for method's sake I shall consider them.)

First, He answers in general, *That these Texts, in their most literal sense, amount to no more than this, that the Lord Christ is a Messenger, really come forth from God to men. As much is true of every Prophet, and the very same is used concerning* St. John Baptist, *Joh.* 1. 6. *There was a man sent from God, whose name was* John.

Answ. 1. If these Texts *amount to no more than this, that the Lord Christ is a Messenger from God to men*, then can no more be concluded from thence, than that he was no more a Prophet, and no more with God, and no more sent from God, than other Prophets, or than *John the Baptist*.

And if *as much as this is true of every Prophet*, then it may be said of every Prophet, and of *John the Baptist* as well as our Saviour,

viour, that he *ascended into Heaven*, and *came down from Heaven*, and *was with God*, and had *a Glory with him before the World was*, *&c.* But where do we find the Scripture to express it self after this manner of any but our Saviour, no not of *Moses*, as much a *Friend of God*, and conversant with him, as he is affirmed to be?

2. If these Texts *amount to no more than this*, that Christ is a *Messenger from God to men*, then how will our Author be able to make use of any of these Texts for that new Doctrine of theirs, concerning Christ's Ascension into Heaven, *before he began his Ministry?* For if *as much is true of every Prophet*, then our Saviour no more ascended than other Prophets; and then what becomes of his *express proof* for such an Assertion?

Secondly, He answers again, *How little these Texts are to his* Grace's *purpose*, *would have been obvious to every Reader*, *if he had set down some few of the many Texts which so plainly expound to us what is meant thereby.* Joh. 7. 28. *I am not come of my self.* Joh. 5. 43. *I am come in my Father's name.* Joh. 8. 42. *I came not of my self*, *he sent me.* Joh. 7. 16. *My doctrine is not mine*, *but his that sent me*, &c.

A. These Texts would have not been to his *Grace's purpose*, if they prove *no more than that our Saviour was a Messenger sent from God to men*, *and which is as true of every Prophet.* For if our Saviour no more came from God than other Prophets (as far as these Texts will then signify) he was no more pre-existent than they. But these Texts are *to his purpose* if they *expressly say*, *that Christ actually came down from Heaven to declare the will of God to men* (as our Author in the next Paragraph, forgetting himself, doth affirm.) For if that be allowed, then all the Difficulties *his Grace* has urged against their imaginary Doctrine of our Saviour's *Ascension into heaven*, *before his Ministry*, will return upon them, and require an answer.

As for what he adds from these latter Texts, 'Would our Saviour have said he came from God, is sent by God, to deliver a 'Doctrine which is not the Messenger's, if he had himself pre-'tended to be God?

A. This, I am sure is nothing to the purpose; for what is this to the Pre existence of our Saviour, the present subject of the Discourse? But however, what inconsistence is there in this, for our Saviour to say, *the Doctrine is not mine*, *but his that sent*

sent me, tho he himself be God, and partake of the same Nature with the Father, when he is the only begotten of the Father, and was also Man? Why is this any more inconsistent, than to have it said, that he is *God*, and yet the *Man Christ Jesus*; that he was *in the beginning with God*, and yet born in the *fulness of time*; that he *knew all things*, John 16. 30. 21. 17. and yet *knew not the time* or *day of Judgment?* Mark 13. 32, *&c.*

These things are consistent upon the Principles of the *Orthodox* or *Trinitarians*, that hold the *Word* to be God and Man; but not upon theirs that hold, that he is Man and not God.

3. He answers again in general, That his Grace *propounded to prove the Pre-existence of our Saviour, by the Texts that expressly say our Lord Christ ascended into Heaven before he began his Ministry, and then came down from Heaven to declare the Will of God to Men. That is, he propounds to prove the* Trinitarian *Doctrine, but really proves the Doctrine of the* Unitarians.

A. 1. If this be so, his *Grace* was mightily mistaken, to attempt the proof of this Point by such *Texts* as *expressly say* the contrary. A great and inexcusable over-sight, if it were true. But where are those *Texts* that *expressly say*, that our Saviour *ascended into Heaven before his Ministry?* It was a prejudice *Socinus* would infuse into his Reader, that there is but that one Text of St. *John* 1. to prove the Pre-existence of our Saviour before his Incarnation, which the Archbishop has disproved, *p.* 81. But here it holds; for his *Texts* that he saith *expressly* prove what he asserts, shrink all into one, *viz. No man hath ascended into Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven.*

2. Where is it *expressly said* in that, or any other Text, that our Saviour *ascended into Heaven before his Ministry?* It is not so *expressly* said, That our Saviour *ascended into Heaven*, but that *Servetus* understood it *Spiritually*, and saith that it was so express'd, *because his Spirit was from the beginning in Heaven, and that his words were heavenly.* But it's neither there, nor any where *expressly* said, That our Saviour ascended into Heaven *before his Ministry, and then came down from Heaven to declare the Will of God to Men.* That is wholly a Fiction of a Case, as his

Lordship has sufficiently proved. Our Author, indeed, would represent it, as if his *Grace* had only *found fault* with them for this their Opinion; and after the having bestowed a few hard words upon it, and call'd it *an Arbitrary and Precarious Supposition*, (tho he himself *understands the Text in a literal Sense*) should then give it up.

But that this is a Fiction of their own, I may say again, his *Lordship* has sufficiently proved; and so much the more reason have I now to say it, as his Adversary has not dared so much as to take to task any one Argument or Paragraph relating to it. For with what strength doth his *Grace* argue against it from the exact History of our *Saviour*'s Life, from the importance of the matter (if true), from the Silence of the Evangelists, and especially of St. *John?* How doth he argue against it from the Weakness of the *Socinian* attempts to prove it, and for which in effect *they have nothing to say?* How from the inconsistency of it with Scripture? and that whereas St. *John* saith, The *Word was in the beginning*, and then *was made Flesh:* They say, That he was first *made Flesh*, and then a great while after was *in the beginning with God.* How, lastly, doth he argue from the disagreement in the several parts of this their Interpretation; as it may be worth the Reader's while himself to observe*?

* *Serm.* 2. *p.* 93, *&c.*

All this our Author has prudently pass'd over; but that he may seem to say something, and have a fair opportunity to Complement where he wants a Reply; he forms a Question for his *Grace*, (for it's a Charge, and not a Question, *Archbishop*, p. 92, 93.) *He demands*, saith he, *when did this Ascension of our Saviour into Heaven happen?* His *Grace* had indeed charged it upon them, that they themselves *cannot agree precisely when*; and without doubt he wanted a fair account of it. But our Author unfortunately pitches upon that time for it, which his Adversary had beforehand prevented. For thus he answers, *St.* John *hath resolved this Question in these words of his Gospel*, [in the beginning the Word was with God] i. e. *in the beginning of his Ministry, just before he enter'd thereon; the Lord Christ was with God by ascending (as himself expressly and often saith) into Heaven.* This Account of it is very *precise*. But to this his *Grace* had already made two Exceptions.

1. That

1. That this is not consistent with their own Explication of the Phrase, *in the beginning*, that is to say, when the Gospel first began to be published; which was by Authority from him (*he having ascended into Heaven, and came from thence to declare the Will of God to men*, as our Author saith) but that was not began to be published, till after he had been with God (in their sense.) And therefore if the *Word* was at all with the Father, so as to ascend from Earth to Heaven, it must not have been *in the beginning*, but before the beginning.

2. He sheweth, this is not reconciliable to another Opinion of theirs, which is, that Christ was not God but by Office and Divine Constitution, and that he was not so constituted and declared till after his Resurection, and his being advanced to the right hand of God; but if in *the beginning*, is in the beginning of the Gospel-state, then the *Word* was God in the same beginning that he was with God, and so must be God by Office, before he enter'd upon his Office of Publick Ministry, and consequently long before his Resurrection. But if he was so constituted not till after his Resurrection, he was not God in their sense of *the beginning*, and so consequently was not with God, nor did ascend into *Heaven before he began his Ministry*. So that there is no manner of proof, either for the Matter, or the time of this Legendary Doctrine of theirs, concerning our Saviour's Ascension into Heaven *before he began his Ministry*, if the aforesaid Arguments hold good.

But that which our Author presses most, (without regarding the Arguments against it) is the *literal* sense of the Phrase, *No man hath ascended*, &c. in which, he saith, the Archbishop *doth understand it*. But this is no more true that his *Grace* so understands it, than that it's *expressly and often* said in Scripture, that our Saviour ascended into Heaven before his Ministry, (as our Author affirms) unless it be when his *Grace* undertakes to prove that such an Ascension never was.

But supposing it were *literally* to be understood, yet will it not serve their purpose. For then, according to the letter of it, our Saviour must have come down from Heaven before he ascended thither. If it had been worded, that *no man hath come down from Heaven, but he that hath ascended into Heaven*, then he would have ascended first, and after that have descended: But when it's said, *No man hath ascended into Heaven, but he that came*

down from Heaven, (if the manner of speaking is to be our Guide) then he must have came down before he ascended, after the way the Apostle speaks, *Ephes.* 4. 9, 10. *Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first*, &c.

I say, the order of Words then shews, that his Descent must have been before his Ascension; which is diametrically opposite to the *Socinian* Hypothesis, and is not to be accommodated but by the Orthodox sense of it, *viz.* that he that in the Beginning was with God, and had a Glory with the Father before the World was, in the fulness of time was *made Flesh*, and came down from Heaven, to fulfil and declare the Will of God to men. And then it orderly follows, No man hath so ascended into Heaven, and no man hath been there to understand the Will of the Father, but he that first came down from Heaven, and is in due time to ascend thither; as if he had said, (to transcribe the Paraphrase of a very learned person) *from me alone are these things to be learned, for none can go up to Heaven to fetch the knowledge of them from thence, but I came down from Heaven to reveal the Will of God* *, &c.

* Lightf. *Third Part of the Harm. in loc.*

The second sort of Texts which speak of our Saviour's Existence before his Incarnation, are these, *Father glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the World was*, John 17. 5. *And before Abraham was, I am*, &c. John 8. 58.

To the first our Author replies, that according to St. *Austin* and *Grotius*, this is to be understood of *God's Decree*, after this manner, *Let me now actually receive that glory with they self, which I had with thee in thy Decree and Purpose before the World was.* And if we may take his word, he saith, that he has *sufficiently confirmed* this Interpretation in the Second Edition of his *Brief History of the* Unitarians.

He very seasonably refers us to his *Second Edition*, (which I have not seen) for in the first it exceedingly wants some Confirmation. All that he has to say there, is, that we in Scripture are sometimes said to *have* that which we *have in God's Decree.* From whence he infers, *Therefore so also we may understand, that Christ had Glory before the World was.* An inference very cautiously worded, *Therefore we may understand*, &c. And it was not without reason, as I shall immediately shew.

A. 1. I grant that the Scripture doth often represent things after this manner, so that that which is to be hereafter, is spoken of as if it was actually present and existent, as *Isaiah* 53. 3. *He is despised and rejected of men.* And in like manner we are reputed to have that which we have by promise, as in the place he quotes, 2 Cor. 5. 1. *We have a building of God*, &c. But then as Decrees and Promises do in the nature of them respect the future, so there must be some reason for this manner of speaking, which without such reason would be absurd. Now, the reason of such Forms of Speech, is to represent the certainty of the thing, that it being thus appointed and promised by Almighty God, it shall as certainly be fulfilled in its season, as if it was now actually present. But set aside such Reason, and such Forms of Speech will be absurd; as for Example, if I should say, all Generations that shall be to the Worlds end are now in being, and have been ever since the World was. But there is no such reason for such an Interpretation here, for this respects the time past.

2. Tho we should be said to have that which we are decreed to have, yet we cannot be said to have it *before the World was*; as for instance, we cannot be said to have *a building of God* before the World was; for that is to have it before we were. We may be said by the foresaid Prophetical Scheme of Speech to have what we that are in being, shall have in its proper time; but we are not said to have it, or to have *had* it before the Foundation of the World. God indeed may be said to give before the World, by virtue of his Decree and Intention so to do, because he always was, is, and ever will be, and to him all things are present in their Causes, over which he has an absolute Power. But tho we may be said to have, with respect to the time to come, as well as present (in the Cases aforesaid) yet we cannot properly be, nor are in Scripture said *to have* it before the World was, because we are born in the World. Thus God may be said to *give* us Grace or Salvation *before the World began*, in the place he cites, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. but we are not said to *have* a building of God *before the world was*. And so when it's said, *Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*; as it doth suppose our Saviour to have been in being, and to have had a Glory with the Father before the World,

so

so he cannot be said to have it in Decree before the World was.

3. And that the words are not capable of such an Interpretation will further appear from the Phrase, *with thee*, which answers to that which went before, *with thine own self*; and if the latter doth signify the actual Enjoyment of that Glory, then so doth the former. Indeed, the Phrase *with thine own self*, and *with thee*, (for they are both one) doth suppose the Person that is *with God* to be in being. As it was when God is said to be *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; thereby is implied, that those Holy Patriarchs are alive, according to our Saviour's reasoning, *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*, Matth. 22. 32. And if *to be the God of Abraham*, did imply that *Abraham* was in being; then surely, if it had been said of *Abraham*, that he was *with God*, it must also imply that *Abraham* actually was. For he could no more be said to be *with God*, and not be; than God could be said to be *his God*, and he not alive.

And accordingly it might as well be said of *Abraham*, that God was *his God* in Decree and Intention, as *Abraham* might be said to be *with God*, and yet be no otherwise so than in God's Decree. So absurd is it, with our Author, to allow our Saviour to have had no Being before the World was, and yet to say he was *with God* before the World, which is in the same breath to say he was not, and yet he was. A difficulty our Author, with those he follows, found to be so great, that they chose rather to give a new interpretation of the Phrase, *in the beginning*, John 1. 1. (as has been before shew'd) and so to allow the *Word* to have then been actually *with God*; rather than to maintain, as some others before did, that the *Word* was *with God* in his Decree, contrary to the plain and evident meaning of that Phrase.

4. I may add, If the sense of this Prayer of our Saviour is, *Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee in thy Decree and Promise before the world was*; then (according to what our Saviour saith, *ver.* 22. *The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them*, the like Glory being promised to and decreed for all the Faithful) every good man may use the same Prayer with our Saviour, and say, *Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the World*

World was. But I suppose St. *Austin*, (who our Author saith was for this decretal sense) would not have presumed to do so.

I confess I have done more than in strictness I was obliged to, when he refers us to another Book of his, and to another Edition of that Book; but I am apt to think this Answer will serve for either Meridian.

The second Text produced by the *Archbishop*, is *John* 8. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am:* 'The obvious sense of which words '(saith his *Grace*) is, That he had a real Existence before 'Abraham was actually in Being, *p.* 86.

But on the contrary, the *Socinians* say, That he was before *Abraham* was, in the Divine Foreknowledge and Decree. This his Lordship took to task, and shewed,

'That this is nothing but what might have been said of any 'other man, and even of *Araham* himself; and that our Saviour 'had then no preference or advantage above *Abraham.* And then argues from the words *I am*, as the proper Name of God, whereby is signified the Eternal Duration and Permanency of his Being. Which he confirms by several other places.

To this our Author has nothing to reply; but would insinuate as if his *Grace* had only proposed the place, without any manner of Proof; for after this ridiculous manner doth he represent it: *His Grace will not hear of this* [about the Decree]; *we cannot help it; but we know the reason to be, because he taketh it as a ground of his Interpretation of this Text, that our Saviour was (not only in God's Decree, but) in actual Existence before his Progenitor* Abraham; *but that is the Point which his Grace had to Prove, not to Suppose as a ground of Interpretation.* This person writes, I perceive, for a Party, and presumes his Readers will never consult the Books he pretends to answer; for else he would not so boldly venture thus to impose upon the world, and to tell us that his *Grace* only *supposes*, but does not *prove* what he proposes; and accordingly he himself slips over the Argument, and runs from it as far as he can.

2. He replies, *Here again I must mind his Grace, that none of his Proofs, in their utmost stretch, run higher than* Arianism.

A. *Proofs:* He should have call'd them *Suppositions*, if he had not forgot himself.

But what if those *Proofs run no higher than* Arianism? they are sufficient: For all his *Grace* was under any obligation at this time

time to prove, was our Saviour's Pre-existence, against the *Socinians*, Serm II. *p.* 56, *&c.* (having in his former Sermon maintained the Point of our Saviour's Deity, against the *Arians*, &c.) And if he has proved that, he has gained the Point under Consideration.

All that our Author has further to say, is, To give us his Opinion of this Text over and over, and ushers it in with a Magisterial Authority: *But if we can, let us make both* Arians *and* Trinitarians *sensible what is the meaning of these words, Before Abraham was, I am, from the Circumstances and Context.*

But if I may not too much incur his displeasure, by laying aside his Supposals for the present, I will venture to propose the Case as the Evangelist relates it, and then discourse with him upon it.

In *Vers.* 48. Our Saviour replied upon the *Jews, Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad.* To this they captiously object, *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* That is, Was't thou coexistent with him, and born in his time, who has been so long dead? Whom makest thou thy self? [*ver.* 52, 53.] To this our Saviour answers, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.* Which Text, according to our Author, is elliptical and imperfect, and wants somewhat to supply it: Which he thus attempts, *I was long before* Abraham*'s time in the decrees and promises of God.*

Now supposing it so to be, Why must it thus be supplied? *O,* saith he, *it cannot be true in any other sense, being spoken of a son and dependant of* Abraham.

Supposing that to be spoke of such a one, why may it not as well fall upon the former as latter part of the Clause, and so be read, Before *Abraham* was the Father of the *Gentiles*, (signified in *Isaac*) *I am*, or *I was* in the world?

Or why may it not be said, Before *Abraham* was, I was in being? For though our Saviour was a Descendant of *Abraham* according to the Flesh, yet he was the begotten Son of God (as none of *Abraham*'s Posterity was) that was in the beginning, and before the World with God; and so he might literally say before *Abraham* was, *I was* or *am.*

But supposing we admit his Explication, that *before Abraham was, I was in God's decree.*

Would

Would this prove what was to be proved, That he that was not fifty years old, had seen *Abraham*, or that he was Co-existent with *Abraham*? Suppose we take it as he would have it, independent of what it was to prove, what a mean thing was it for our Saviour to alledge, *I was before Abraham*, namely, in God's Decree? For,

Might not the *Jews* then reply, So *Abraham* was before *Adam*, and so both *Abraham* and *Adam* were before the World?

Might they not say, so were we then before *Abraham*; *Abraham* before himself, and we before we were? Nay, might they not say, Is any thing before another? Art thou before *Abraham*, or *Abraham* before us, since all would then be co-existent alike in Decree, being the Decrees are alike Eternal?

Might not our Saviour as well have said, I have seen *Abraham*, reserving to himself, in the Book of *Genesis*; as say, *before Abraham was*, *I was*, reserving to himself, in the Book of God's Decree?

Lastly, If our Saviour had said, Before *Abraham* was, I was in God's Decree, or had been so understood, where was the Blasphemy for which the *Jews* would have stoned him?

It is apparent that the *Jews* presently understood him, being a Title known to all, and known to belong only to God, as well known (by reason of that noted place it relates to in *Exodus*) as *Jehovah*, and so immediately they took up stones to cast at him.

But his Grace hath not so done with this Text, but goes on to fortifie it with other parallel places, as to the phrase and signification, p. 100. as *Hebr.* 13. 8. *The same yesterday, to day, and for ever.* And *Revelat.* 1. 8, 17. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*, Rev. 22. 13, 16.

This our Author declines, and instead of proposing it as it lay in his *Grace's* Sermon, he takes up the latter of these places in the close of his Discourse upon this Head after this manner, *The last of his* Grace's *Texts to prove the Pre-existence and Divinity of our Saviour, is* Rev. 1. 8. p. 58. *b.*

Though out of its place, I am content to take it as he proposes it; and especially because I may hope now, if ever, to make a Convert of him; for thus he answers, *When his Grace proves that these words are spoken, not of God, but of Christ, I will thank him, and give him the Cause.*

Fairly offered, and fit to be accepted.

In the first place, I take it for granted, that I need not remind him of what his *Grace* has observed, That *these Expressions are the common Description which the Scripture gives of the Eternity of God, whose Being is commensurate to all the several respects of Duration, past, present, and to come.* For this is the reason why our Author denies this to belong to our Saviour, since that would be to ascribe such a Being to him, as is commensurate to all these Durations. Therefore with his usual assurance, he affirms, "That they are not spoken of our Lord Christ, seems to me as "Meridian Light, from what is said *v.* 4. *From him which is,* "*which was, and which is to come, and from Jesus Christ.* Where "we see plainly, that Jesus Christ is distinguished as a different "person from that Almighty who is, and who was, and who "is to come; therefore he cannot be intended in the Description, *v.* 8.

Answer. I suppose that he intends this as a general Answer to the several places of the *Revelation* quoted by his *Grace*; and then it's as much as to say, that since *Jesus Christ is distinguished from him who is, and was, and is to come*, v. 4. *therefore he cannot be intended at* v. 8. nor 17. nor Ch. 22. 13, 16. That is, that these Expressions, which are the common Description the Scripture gives of the Eternity of God, are never applied in any of those places to our Saviour: But if it appears that they are at any time applied to our Saviour, his Argument is utterly ruined, and it will unanswerably follow, that if Jesus Christ *is, and was, and is to come*, then he is alike Eternal as the Father, and partaker of one and the same nature with him.

2. How doth it follow that *Jesus Christ is distinguished as a different person from him who is, was, and is to come; therefore he cannot be intended in the Description at* ver. 8.? For he may be a different person from the Almighty Father, who is described by that Character, *v.* 4. and yet as the Son have the same property Essential to the Divine Nature ascribed to him. This we contend for, and this I shall endeavour to prove.

I shall begin with *v.* 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* All the question is, who is *the Lord* that thus saith of himself, *I am Alpha and Omega*, &c? For this we must consult the context, and then the Character will appear

pear to be his that *cometh with Clouds*, v. 7. That *made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father*, v. 6. *the firſt begotten of the Dead, the Prince of the Kings of the earth, that loved us and waſhed us in his blood*, even *Jeſus Chriſt*, *v.* 5. So that he is no leſs the *Alpha and Omega*, than he is *the Prince of the Kings of the earth.*

But let us go on with that Divine Writer, whom we find after the ſame manner deſcribing our Saviour, *v.* 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt.* And that it's given as a Character belonging to him, is evident, for he is the ſame that commanded St. *John* to write, and whoſe Voice he heard, the *Son of man* that he ſaw in *the midſt of the ſeven candleſticks*, v. 12, 13. So again, *v.* 17. he that ſaith of himſelf, *I am the firſt and the laſt*, is the ſame with him that ſaith of himſelf, *v.* 18. *I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.* So again, he ſaith of himſelf, *chap.* 2. 8. *Theſe things ſaith the firſt and the laſt, which was dead and is alive.* And as St. *John* begins, ſo he ends this Prophetical Book, *cap.* 22. 13. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the firſt and the laſt*; viz. the ſame with him that ſaith, *ver.* 12, & 20. *Behold, I come quickly*; — *Jeſus that ſent his Angel to teſtify theſe things*, v. 16.

From all which laid together it is very manifeſt, and *as clear as the Meridian light*, that theſe Phraſes are applied to our Saviour, that he is *the beginning and the ending*, *which is*, *and which was*, *and which is to come*, *the Almighty.* But how can the Being of a Creature be commenſurate to all the ſeveral reſpects of Duration, paſt, preſent, and to come? And what a preſumption would it be in a Creature that had a beginning, to ſay of himſelf, *I am Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt?* So that our Author muſt in the concluſion ſide with his *Antient Unitarians* and deny the *Revelation* to be Canonical; or be as good as his word, and *give* his Adverſary the *Cauſe*, and write a Retractation.

The laſt place our Author touches upon (omitting ſeveral other material Texts cited by his *Grace*) is 1 *Joh.* 1. 1, 2. *That which was from the beginning*, *which we have heard*, &c. which he thus expounds (calling into his aid *Grotius* and *Vorſtius*, in his Opinion *two the ableſt Interpreters the Church has yet had.*)

1. *The Word of Life*, that is, *the Goſpel.*

2. *Eternal Life*, i. e. *the Immortality therein promiſed.*

3. *From the beginning*, that is, *they were always intended and purposed by him, but not manifested till reveal'd in the Gospel.*

4. We have *seen* and *handled*, is to *signifie their knowledge of it was most assured and absolute. For the Hebrews are wont to declare the certainty and clearness of things by Terms borrowed from the Senses.*

Ans. Though the *Hebrews* are wont to *express the certainty and clearness* of things after that manner; yet I don't find that the Scripture is wont to speak thus of the Gospel, *viz.* The Gospel which *was from the beginning, which we have seen with our Eyes, and our Hands have handled, and which was with the Father.* But I find that Saint *John* in his Gospel speaks of our Saviour in the like terms, for thus he saith of him, *In the beginning* (which is the same with ἀπ' ἀρχῆς here, as his Grace observed p. 19. and *Grotius* before him) *was the Word, and the Word was with God*, v. 4. *In him was life*, v. 14. *We beheld his Glory*, and he is said to be *manifested*, Joh. 14. 21, 22. and 1 *Joh.* 3. 5, 8.

Now what can be more evident than that when the Author is the same, the phrase the same, and more agreeable to the Subject under consideration, that it should be alike understood in one Book as the other, and so that which we have *heard*, and *seen*, and *looked upon*, and *handled*, and *was with the Father*, should be the Son, and not the Gospel of God?

But saith our Author, *Grotius* and *Vorstius* think otherwise; and he goes on, *I know not why his Grace overlook'd this Interpretation of two of the most learned and judicious Criticks of this or any other age.*

Answer, I answer in his phrase, *I marvel much how* our Author *should know* that his Grace *overlook'd* it, for it's likely that he might not have the same opinion with this Writer of these two great men, so as to think them the *ablest Interpreters the Church has yet had: Vorstius* for many reasons; and *Grotius* for his posthumous Notes (I should rather call them *adversaria*) come not up to that Character. Besides his *Grace* knew very well what both the Antient and *learned and judicious Criticks* of latter Ages, thought of this Text. In the number of the former is *Tertullian*, adv. Praxeam. c. 15. Amongst the latter is *Erasmus*; and even *Grotius* is inconsistent with himself, when he goes off from the Gospel to the Miracles that attested it, in his Explication of the word ἐθεασάμεθα, *which we have looked upon.*

Before

Before his *Grace* leaves the Argument of our Saviour's Deity, he takes notice of a usual plea of the *Socinians*, that they glory they have Reason clearly on their side in this and the other point of the B. Trinity; and that the Difficulties and Absurdities are much greater and plainer on our part than on theirs, A.B.p. 115.

To each of these his Lordship made a distinct Reply, and shew'd particularly as to the Doctrine of the Trinity, that tho' it was above, yet it was not contrary to Reason; that though there were Difficulties, yet no Absurdity in it. This our Author thought fit to pass over in silence.

As to the latter, his *Grace* undertook to prove that the Opinion of our Adversaries hath *greater Difficulties in it, and more palpable Absurdities following from it*, than any they could charge upon the Orthodox.

As when they say, *That the Son of God is a meer Creature, not God by Nature, and yet truly and really God by Office, and by Divine Appointment and Constitution; to whom the very same Honour and Worship is to be given which we give to him who is God by Nature.* p. 123.

In which his *Grace* observes two Difficulties and Absurdities. 1. That 'they hereby bring Idolatry by a back-door into the 'Christian Religion, as they give Divine Worship to a 'mere Creature, and as they willingly admit two Gods, 'the one by Nature, and the other by Office. 2. That they cannot vindicate themselves in this point in any other way, than what will in a great measure acquit both the *Pagans* and *Papists* from the charge of Idolatry.

This our Author saith, is *not an uncommon imputation* on the *Socinian* Doctrine, and thus far he is in the right, for besides Modern Writers, the stream of the Fathers charge the *Arians* with Idolatry as they Worship Christ, whom they suppose to be a meer Creature. Thus *Athanasius*, *Gregory Naz.* and *Nyssen.* St. *Basil*, *Epiphanius*, &c.

And this Charge our Author doth rather avoid than deny; for which purpose he divideth the *Unitarians* into two sorts: Such as give Christ no Divine Worship: Of these he saith, *It is certain we have wrote no Book this seven years, in which we have not been careful to profess to all the world, that a like Honour or Worship (much less the same) is not to be given to Christ as to God.* And then he will by all means have this Charge of worshipping our Saviour.

Saviour, to be a foul Calumny thrown on them by the *Trinitarian* Preachers. *Do the* Trinitarians *think*, saith our huffing Controvertist, *they may devise a Religion for us, and then come up into their Pulpits to declaim against the Schemes that are purely of their own Invention?* In good time we shall have a *Pulpit Socinianism*, as there was in the late Reign a *Pulpit Popery*; for this Author writes in the very way and Phrase of *Misrepresentation* and *Representation*. But after all, is this a Misrepresentation? Did never any *Unitarians* or *Socinians* give Honour and Worship, *a like* and even the *same* to Christ as to the Father? Is that Charge a *Device* of the *Trinitarians*? Our Author will undertake for himself, for that is the *We* in this Book, the Author of the *History of the Unitarians*, the Author of the *Criticisms* on Mr. *Milbourn*, &c. and so for *Seven Years* backwards. *We*, saith he, *have wrote no Book this seven years, in which we have not been careful*, &c. But were there no years before the last *Seven*, that can be looked into? He knew what the *Arians*, and what *Socinus* and his Followers held and do hold. But he and his, for whom we want a Name, (for they are in this neither *Arians* nor *Socinians*) unless we will call them *Franciscо-Davidists*, are herein very reserved and cautious, that they may not give the *same* nor *alike* Honour to our Saviour as to God. Indeed if they were of another mind before the *seven years* past, they have done well to change it, to ease themselves of a troublesome Charge of giving Divine Worship to a mere Creature, as did the *Arians* and *Socinians*; and of as troublesom Adversaries as *Socinus* found *Franciscus David* to be, that would not allow Divine Worship to be given to Christ, because he was a Creature, and that by so doing they should be guilty of Idolatry.

But after all his fuming, and his talk of a *Devised Religion*, and *declaiming Pulpits*, and *Schemes purely of their own Invention*, he is forced to own that there is a second sort of *Unitarians* that give Divine Worship to our Saviour; and that's an Objection in his way. *But his Grace will say perhaps, Why? Do you not pray to Christ?* And to close the Objection, Do you not then give the *like*, nay the *same* Honour to Christ as to God?

His Answer to this is well worthy our Observation.

1. *There are indeed some Unitarians who pray to the Lord Christ.* But why *Some?* Did not the numerous *Arians*, and did not *Socinus*, and generally all called after his name do so; and did they

they not think themselves obliged so to do, inveighing against those that did not?

2. He adds by way of Excuse, They pray'd to him indeed, but it was to him, *as that Mediatory King, who is (say they) appointed by God to succour us in all our straits and wants.* But is not this to *equal him with God*, to whom alone we are taught to direct our Prayers? Nay, is not this to attribute to him the Divine Properties of Omniscience and Omnipotence, when he is supposed to know and *succour us in all our straits and wants?* No, saith he, for *they own that his knowledge either of our wants or Prayers is only by Revelation from God; and his Power by which he relieves us, is wholly of God's giving.*

But is not Prayer a part of Divine Worship, and peculiar to God? And don't they then *equal* him to God, when they pray to him? And is not that Idolatry, to give to a Creature the Worship belonging to the Creator? And can any Divine *Appointment* make that not to be Idolatry, which in its nature is so? (as the Protestants use to maintain against the Church of *Rome*). And besides, don't those *Socinians* that worship our Saviour, affirm that they worship him as God? Thus *Socinus* himself pleads, *Ut pro Deo ac Domino suo venerentur*, Tom. 2. p. 631. That *they worship him as their God and Lord.* And much more to the same purpose. And what is it to worship him *as God*, but to give him Divine Worship?

The Second Difficulty and Absurdity his *Grace* charges upon them, is a Plurality of Gods, *the one by Nature, the other by Office, a Creature-God, a God merely by Positive Institution.*

All that he has to say to this, is, *Will he deny positively and directly, that the Lord Christ is a God by Representation and Office?* And then steals off with, *Let his Grace give it under his hand, That the Lord Christ is not a God in these senses.*

A. This is much as if when charged with Idolatry for giving Divine Worship to Christ, if a mere Man, he should say, Will his *Grace deny positively and directly*, that Christ is a Man? For though he denies not Christ to be a Man, yet he affirms, That Christ, if no more than a Man, is not to be worshipped with Divine Honour. So tho he should not deny Christ to be a God *by Representation and Office*, yet he affirms that one who is so and no more, cannot be the True God, nor be worshipped as God; for that would establish a Plurality of Gods. But his *Grace*

on

on the other hand took not himself concerned, nor doth the Case require, that he should positively assert, That Christ is a God by Representation; for that is more than our Author himself dares to do, who faintly enough concludes, *That as* Moses *is called a God, so also Christ may be called a God by Mission, Representation, and Office.*

Now how unreasonable a thing is this, That he should put it so hard upon his *Grace, to deny positively and directly*, what this Author himself dares not *positively* and *directly* affirm? for he cautiously saith (for fear a Proof should be required), *So also may Christ be called a God.* But our Author is too sparing and modest in his expressions, for the *Socinians* are not backward to acknowledge, That our Saviour is *True God*, and that *there are more True Gods than one*; and that to say *there is One only Supreme Independent God, and to worship one God by Nature, is Judaical, and a renouncing of the Christian Religion.* Vid. *Smalcius* Exam. Cent. Err. & Refutatio *Smig.* de novis monstris, *&c.*

To conclude, His *Grace* had said, 'That the *Socinians* cannot 'vindicate themselves in this Point any other way, than what 'will in great measure acquit both the *Pagans* and the *Papists* 'from the Charge of Idolatry.

This our Author calls a *Thunder-clap*; and truly by his own Pleas he makes good the *Imputation.* For,

1. He saith, They pray to Christ as a *Mediatory King, who is appointed by God to succor us in all our straits*: And of this kind were the *Dii Medioxumi* among the Heathens; and so are the Mediators of Intercession, the Saints and Angels, in the Church of *Rome*, who they say are appointed by the Supreme God to hear and succour us.

2. He saith, That the *knowledge our Saviour hath either of our Wants or Prayers, is only by Revelation from God; and his Power is wholly of God's giving.*

So the *Romanists* say, That the Saints have their Knowledge of our state, either by Revelation, or *in speculo Trinitatis*, in the Glass of the Trinity; which is much the same.

3. Our Author saith, The Worship given to Christ is not the *same* which is given to God. So the Church of *Rome* hath their Superior Worship, *Latria*, which they give to God; and an inferior, *Dulia*, which they give to Saints.

4. Our

4. Our Author ſaith, Though theſe *Socinians* pray to Chriſt, *yet they don't hereby equal him to God.* This is the very Plea made by the Church of *Rome* for the Worſhip they give, and the Prayers they offer to Saints and Angels.

From all which we ſee how much Modeſty as well as Truth there is in what his *Grace* obſerves, *That they cannot vindicate themſelves in this Point any other way, than what will in a great meaſure acquit both the* Pagans *and the* Papiſts *from the Charge of Idolatry.*

SECT. II.

Of the Incarnation of our Bleſſed Saviour.

AFTER a Diſcourſe of ſeveral Pages, which our Author declines, his *Lordſhip* proceeded to the moſt uſual and conſiderable Objections of his Adverſaries againſt the Doctrine of Chriſt's Incarnation. As,

Object. 1. They ſay, 'That this Union of the Divinity 'with the Humane Nature, is, if not altogether impoſſible, yet 'very unintelligible.

To this his *Grace* replies, That there is no impoſſibility, is evident from the Union between the Soul and Body of a man, *p.* 147, and 158.

Againſt this our Author makes two Exceptions.

Except. 1. *In a perſonal Union of a Soul with a Body, the Union is between two Finite and Commenſurate things; which is not only poſſible, but very conceivable. But in the pretended perſonal Union of God to Man, and Man to God, the Union is between Finite and Infinite.*

Anſwer. Here our Author over-runs the Point, when he conſiders the perſonal Union of a Soul and Body, merely as a Union between two Finites; for inſtances between ſuch, the World is full of: Whereas the Difficulty is, as the Union is between Soul and Body, that is, Spirit and Matter, which are two extreams, and ſo *incommenſurate*; and yet notwithſtanding they are not only vitally united, but they *both retain their diſtinct*

Natures and Properties, as his *Grace* obſerves. Under which Notion, the perſonal Union between two ſuch *unequals* is as difficult to conceive (were it not that *we are ſure that it is*) as the perſonal Union between the divine and humane Natures in our Saviour.

But our Author purſues his Point. For, ſaith he,

The perſonal Union of God to Man is *between Finite and Infinite*; *which cannot be without admitting one of theſe things*; *Either that Finite and Infinite are Commenſurate*; *which every one knows is falſe: Or, that the Finite is united only to ſome part of the Infinite, and is disjoyned from the reſt of it*; *which all* Trinitarians *deny and abhor*; *becauſe if ſo, Jeſus Chriſt ſhould not be perfect God, but only God in part.*

Anſwer. By this way of arguing our Author may as well undertake to prove, that there is no ſuch thing as a *perſonal Union* between the Soul and Body; For, *that cannot be imagined without admitting one of theſe two things*; either that Soul and Body are *commenſurate and equal*, and alike extended, *which every one knows is falſe*: Or, That Body and Soul are *united as to ſome part only*, which is *disjoyned from the reſt*, and that is of a Spirit to make it material. What more plain, if his Argument be true, than that there can be no perſonal Union between the Soul and Body, ſuch diſtant extremes? So that you may as ſoon expect that the ſoft and impalpable Air ſhould be united to a Thunderbolt, or a Speculative thought to a Milſtone, as that there can be a Union between things ſo incommenſurate and unequal, as a Body and a Soul are. But if notwithſtanding ſuch conceived Difficulties, Soul and Body are thus found to be united; then is it alike conſiſtent that the two Natures in our Bleſſed Saviour be united in one Perſon.

Again, by the ſame way he may go on and prove that *Immenſity* is no perfection of the Divine Nature; and that it's impoſſible God ſhould be every where, and Eſſentially preſent. For *Immenſity* (if it be) has a relation to place, that is, *Infinite* to *Finite*: but ſuch a relation cannot be in God, without one of theſe two things, that *Finite* [place] and *Infinite* [immenſity] are *Commenſurate*, *which every one knows is falſe*: Or, that the Finite [place] has a relation to ſome part of the Infinite, and is disjoyned from the reſt of it; and ſo the Divine Eſſence is partible and diviſible, which all deny: The Difficulty

we

we ſee preſſes as hard upon the perſonal Union of Soul and Body, and God's Immenſity, as upon the Union of the Divine and Humane Natures in our Saviour; and which he muſt deny, or give up his Argument.

Indeed it is not for us to talk Metaphyſically of the Divine Nature, till we underſtand our own; nor of the Nature, Kinds and Modes in higher matters, till we underſtand the Connexion and Union of parts in a pebble or a bubble: leſt by ſuch an Attempt we *run our ſelves into Hereſie*, a dangerous and inevitable Rock, as our Author repreſents the Caſe; or into his downright Nonſenſe, of uniting two Underſtandings, or Perſons, *by the Abolition of one of them.*

Except. 2. *The Union of Soul and Body may be perſonal, that is, may conſtitute or make one Perſon: becauſe it is not the Union of two Perſons, but only of one Perſon (the Soul) to a thing which is otherways without Life, Reaſon, Memory, or Free-Will.— But in the (pretended) Union of God with Man, there are two diſtinct, and very different Lives, Reaſons, Memories and Free-Wills, which utterly deſtroy the Notion of a perſonal Union. For a perſonal Union ſuppoſes but one Life, one Reaſon, one Memory, one Free-Will. Becauſe if theſe things which conſtitute a Perſon are found more than once, there is no longer one Perſon but two, and conſequently no perſonal Union in the ſenſe in which we are arguing.*

Anſwer. I deny that two Lives, or two Underſtandings, or two Free-Wills, do neceſſarily make two different Perſons or Beings, when there is a Subordination between them; for then they receive their Denomination or Title from the Supreme. As we uſually ſay there are three ſorts of Life, Vegetation in Plants, Animality in Brutes, and Rationality in men; now if one of theſe is alone, that gives Denomination to it, as a Plant is called a Vegetable. But when the Vegetative life is united to the Animal, it loſes that Character, and the Creature then is called an Animal, and is ſo called as if there was no Principle in it of Vegetation. And the rational (though there be Vegetation and Animality) is ſo called, as if there was no Vegetation or Animality. That is, when there are ſeveral Powers one in Subordination to another, they make not ſeveral Beings (as they would do if alone) but the Supream gives the Denomination to the whole.

And thus it is in the Caſe before us, where there are two Natures, the Divine and Humane; two Lives, the Immortal and Mortal; two Underſtandings, an infinite and a Limited; two Wills; and yet not two Perſons: becauſe the Underſtanding and Will of the Inferior (the Humane Nature) is ſubordinate to the Superior (the Divine) and ſo the Perſon is as much one, as if there had been but one Nature, one Life, one Underſtanding, and one Will.

As to our Author's Hiſtory of *Apollinarius*, *Neſtorius*, *and Eutyches*, (were I diſpoſed to make Excurſions) I could preſent him with the Rhapſody and Bedrole of the Opinions of thoſe he calls *Unitarians*, from *Cerinthus* and *Ebion* downward to *Socinus*, and of the Violences and Outrages of the *Arians* againſt the *Photinians* and Orthodox; and of the Rancour of the *Photinians* againſt the *Arians* and Orthodox: but that I ſhall refer to a more proper occaſion.

Object. 2. 'Tis a thing incongruous, and much beneath the 'Dignity of the Son of God, to be united to Humane Nature.

To this his *Grace* makes a large Reply, and amongſt other things ſaith: 'The lower any Being, be he never ſo high, 'condeſcends to do good, the Glory of his Goodneſs ſhines ſo 'much the brighter.

To this paſſage alone our Author returns an Anſwer, if I may call a Repreſentation ſo, and in requital I ſhall return him the Reverſe of his Compariſon, *mutatis mutandis*. If Chriſt *by the juſt intereſt he has in the favour of his Father, procures the pardon* of Sinners, and *to keep them for the time to come from the like bad courſes, ſhould obtain the Grant* of eternal Happineſs, *and then give them ſuch Counſel* and Precepts, *as might beſt diſpoſe them to a new Courſe of Life*; — *Would not this Care and Benignity be ſufficient, unleſs* the Son of God *himſelf* came, and be content to be cloathed with the *Rags* of Humanity, and to be bound and buffetted, *Impriſoned*, Arraigned, Condemned and Crucified for them? In his Judgment, *Such a Scene would have more of Folly than Goodneſs*. And he concludes, *Therefore much leſs is it to be ſuppoſed of God, than of a Wiſe man.*

This needs no farther Animadverſion, the Impiety of it is a ſufficient Reply.

Object. 3. 'The Incarnation is not neceſſary, ſaith he. For our

'our Opposers grant this, that the pardon of Sin might have 'been offer'd to mankind by a Prophet in the name of God; 'so that there was no apparent cogent Necessity, no extraor-'dinary and indispensable cause for it; and so must be allow-'ed an unaccountable, causeless Debasement of the Divine Ma-'jesty; and seeing no such cause is assigned, saith he, we have 'leave to believe it never was.

A. The Objection is of our Author's own forming; and there are two Uses he makes of his Adversary's Concession (which for the present we will take as he represents it.)

1. That if there was no *apparent cogent Necessity*, no *indispensable cause* for the *Incarnation*, it must be an *unaccountable* and *causeless Debasement.*

2. Seeing no such cause is assigned, therefore they *have reason to believe it never was.*

As to the First, it's a gross Mistake; for there may be a good and sufficient cause for that, which there is no *Cogent* and *Indispensable*, and much more no *Apparent* necessity for: He tells us, That *the Gospel and pardon of Sin might have been offer'd to Mankind by a Prophet in the name of God*, and so there was no *Apparent and Cogent necessity* for Christ's Incarnation. And surely if the offering *Pardon by a Prophet* was sufficient, there was no *Apparent*, *Cogent*, and *indispensable* Necessity for Christ's coming into the World; and then (according to our Author's way of arguing) Christ's coming into the World is as *unaccountable*, and *causeless*, as he would have his Incarnation to be.

2. As to the Second: 'Seeing no such cause is assigned, 'therefore the Son of God was never incarnate.

A. I answer, By this way of arguing, Christ was never Crucified, any more than he was Incarnate. For if there was no *Indispensable* cause for it, it might have been omitted; and there was no *Indispensable cause* for it, where the *Teaching of a Prophet* was sufficient. And without an *Indispensable cause*, our Author has taught us *The Wisdom of God would not stoop to such a Humiliation*; And consequently, our Saviour was no more Crucified than he was Incarnate, if our Author argues right.

Under the covert of this Objection, our Author takes to Task the Reasons which his *Grace* offers for our Saviour's being Incarnate; and excepting the case of Mysteries (which I shall reserve for another place) our Author frames one general Answer to them all, *viz.* That

'That *these Considerations do not prove the Incarnation expedient in the Age of* Augustus; *for they were much more forcible in the Time of* Adam, *than of* Augustus. *For in the last, God could propound only to reclaim Men from their Idolatries, Errors and Impieties; but if he had been incarnate in the Age of* Adam *he had prevented them. And if these are good Arguments, 'tis Morally impossible, either that there was in the Age of* Augustus, *or ever shall be an Incarnation.* He concludes, *I think I may say, this is an accurate and just Reasoning: it being founded on this Maxim of common Prudence, that what was more expedient to be done at first than afterwards, would have been at first, if it had been at all expedient to be done.*

A. The Reasons given of Christ's Incarnation, *viz.* The reclaiming Mankind from their *Idolatries, Errors* and *Impieties*, are the same with the Reasons for Christ's coming into the World: And where the Reasons are the same, they are to be tryed in the same way. Let us therefore put *Christ's coming into the World*, into the room of his being *Incarnate*; and we shall find it as requisite (if our Author's Argument be of any force) that he should have *come into the World* from the beginning, as that he should have been *Incarnate* from the beginning; and as *Morally* impossible he should have been born in the Age of *Augustus*, as that he should have been Incarnate in his time. For *these Reasons were much more forcible in the Age of* Adam *than of* Augustus. *For by so late* a Nativity *as the Age of* Augustus, *God could propound only to reclaim Men from their Idolatries*, &c. but *by being* born in the very time of *Adam*, he had *prevented the Idolatries* of 4000 Years.—— *If these be good Arguments for* Christ's Nativity, *'tis Morally impossible, either that there was in the Age of* Augustus, *or that there ever shall be* a Saviour born into the World.

The same Argument will also affect the Gospel, and make it necessary, that it should have been as completely published in the Age of *Adam* as of *Augustus.*

This is a home Charge indeed, a charge of a great *Oversight and neglect* in Almighty God, for want, it seems, of attending to a Maxim of common Prudence, *viz.* Of *doing what was more expedient to be done at first than afterwards.* For according to our Author, the whole design of Salvation by Christ was mistimed, and *the fulness of time* for it was in the Age of *Adam*, and not of *Augustus.* This he accounts *acurate and just Reasoning*;

soning; and I suppose the next News we hear, will be Amendments upon the Gospel; and a Set of Chronological Tables to rectifie us in these Matters. And to that work I leave him. For I suppose he will not expect from his Adversaries, that they should prove to him, that the time of *Augustus* was better than that of *Adam*, for our Lord's appearance in the World; or to give him the Reasons, why Almighty God chose the time of *Augustus* for the Nativity of our Saviour, and the publishing the Gospel by him, rather than the time of *Adam*.

A Vindication of the Lord Bishop of Worcester's *Sermon concerning* The Mysteries of the Christian Faith, *from the Exceptions made against it, by the Author of the* Considerations on the Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity.

IF the Author of *the Considerations* had a mind to have writ upon a Noble Argument, this Learned Adversary gave him a fair occasion to try his Skill, by proposing the two different *Hypotheses* concerning the Salvation of mankind by *Jesus Christ*, and shewing the agreeableness of the one, *By his assuming our Nature, and suffering in our stead*, to the revealed Will of God. Which he confirms, as it's *most plain and easie, and agreeable to the most received Sense of the Words*; as it *suits with the Scope and Design of the whole New Testament*; *hath been generally received in the Christian Church*; *and best agrees with the Characters of those Persons from whom we receive the Christian Faith*, viz. *Christ Jesus and his Apostles*. Upon the last of these his Lordship more particularly Discourses.

But instead of taking his Adversary to Task about this weighty Subject, our Author chuses rather to fall upon some other Points, where he may have a greater Scope for the gratifying his roving Fancy; not caring to be tyed up by the Rules and Measures of strict Argumentation; and therefore for the fitting to his purpose what he had to say, he passes over the other, under the Character of a *great many Heads*, too troublesome for a Reader's view, whereas *the Chief* of all (as he will have it) *lies in these Three*.

1. God

1. 'God may justly require of us to believe what we can-
'not comprehend.

2. 'Those who reject the Mysteries of Faith, do them-
'selves advance greater Mysteries than those they declaim
'against.

3. 'The manner and way of Salvation the Church teaches,
'tends more to the benefit of mankind, than the way of Sal-
'vation by Christ taught by the *Socinians*.

Of these Three Propositions our Author thus passes his Judgment. *The first is true, but not to the purpose. The Second is home to the purpose, but not true. The Third is neither true nor to the purpose.*

When he elsewhere read this Character of a certain Book, without doubt he thought the Cadence of it very pretty, and might be divertive for his Reader, whether it were right or wrong, and fit for his purpose or not. But because I am apt to suspect the Exactness of such Turns of Fancy, I shall make bold to examine them, and see how his Character and the *Heads* of Discourse he applies it to, will agree.

The first, saith he, *is true, but not to the Purpose.*

The contrary of this used to be accounted *true* by his Predecessors in the same way; *Socinus* himself, as his Lordship shewed [Serm. p. 21.] denied *the Divine Prescience*, because he could not comprehend it; and the incomprehensibleness of a Doctrine used to be a mighty Argument amongst the *Socinians*, against the truth of it, as might be shewn. But our Author is of another mind, as he tells us, for the present: And if his Lordship could by *Prescience* have foretold his mind, and foreseen he would have replied upon him, he *might have spar'd to himself* (as he gravely observes) *the Pains of these ten Pages in his Sermon, in which he seeks to prove, that there are many things we do not comprehend.* But his Lordship is not to be blamed for want of that *Prescience*, which the acute *Socinus* would not allow to God himself. And to say the truth of it, he thought he had wrote against a *Socinian* Point, but our Author can tell him, *He utterly mistakes*; perhaps his Lordship had not read *the Notes on the Creed of Athanasius*, nor *the Trinitarian Scheme of Religion*, nor the *Answer to Mr.* Milbourn, (Books our Author recommends) nor the History of *the last Seven years*; for it's likely he might there have found the *Index Expurgatorius* to *Socinus*, and

and his Successors; and the Alterations made in this Refining Age in their grosser Doctrine, without which they will tell him he writes against imaginary *Socinianism*. But our Author within the compass of Three pages changes his mind. In page 4. *All the works of God are Incomprehensible*, and *we cannot comprehend the least Spire of Grass*. But pag. 7. He *cannot understand why his Lordship and many others are so positive, that we cannot comprehend an infinite Attribute*, as *Eternity*. Now I should have thought that *the works of God*, and a *Spire of Grass* are as comprehensible as an *infinite Attribute*. He tells us, *Contradictions are by all confessed to be Impossibilities*; and so I take *Comprehensible* and *Incomprehensible* to be; it remains therefore upon him to shew that they are possible; and that while it is not possible for a *Spire of Grass* to be comprehended, that yet Eternity may. He bears a little too hard upon his Readers, to suppose their Memory or Attention will not hold out Three pages together; and that he may have the liberty to affirm and deny, and contradict himself (as shall best serve his end) without offence to their understanding. But perhaps, *The heat of Writing and Controversie* was the occasion of this Inadvertency.

The first of these, *The Incomprehensiblenss of God's works*, is left in it's place to try its fortune, and to subsist upon its own Credit. But when he maintains *the Comprehensibleness of an infinite Attribute* (he might have said Infinity, for that is a Divine Attribute, because it sounds not so well, and *these Men that have taught the World, that to do Contradictions would not be a Perfection, but an Imperfection in the Divine Nature*, may have also taught them, that Infinity cannot be comprehended by a Finite understanding, nor God be comprehended by a Creature; because of this he takes himself concerned to make good his Paradox, by setting up such a Notion of *Comprehension* as he conceives may support it: And that is, that *to comprehend a thing, is to have a clear, distinct and adequate Conception of it*. And he adds, *May we not have such a Notion of an infinite Attribute? I think we may*. Let us suppose for the present, his Definition of *Comprehension* to be good and right; may we not then have *as clear, distinct, and adequate Conception* of a *Spire of Grass*, or any of *God's Works*, as of Infinity and Eternity? And then how comes he before to *acknowledge the Truth of that saying* of his Lordship's, that *we cannot comprehend the least Spire of Grass?*

But how true ſoever his Notion of Comprehending may be, he miſtakes in the Application, when he ſaith, *We may have a clear, diſtinct, and adequate Conception* of an infinite Attribute. Now we uſed to ſay (till the days of diſcarding Myſteries came on) that only God can comprehend his own Eſſence, and nothing leſs than Infinite could have a *clear, diſtinct*, and *adequate Conception* of Infinite. For 'tis evident we have not a *clear, diſtinct*, and *adequate* Conception of that which we can give no *adequate* Definition of. But we can give no adequate Definition of Infinite; and therefore are forced to ſpeak of it by way of Negation, and rather ſay what it is not, than what it is. Thus he himſelf deſcribes *God's Eternity*, viz. 'Tis *that Duration by which he is without all Beginning and End*, which is by no means, a *clear, diſtinct*, and *adequate* Definition of it. For firſt *Duration* applied to *Eternity*, is what is uſually call'd a Contradiction *in Adjecto:* For ſaith our Author, *It is of the Nature of a Duration to conſiſt in a Succeſſion*; But in Eternity is no Succeſſion. For what Succeſſion was there before the Creation of the World? And yet there was the ſame Eternity then as now. So that to deſcribe Eternity by Duration, and to cut that Indiviſible into parts by Succeſſion, is to make a temporary Eternity, which methinks ſounds as ill as an *Eternal moment*. Secondly, Its by no means an adequate Definition of Eternity, becauſe it conſiſts of Negatives, *without all Beginning and End*. A greater Proof cannot be given of the Inadequateneſs of our Conception, than thus to go through the World of Beings, and Aſſertions, and to ſay it is not this, and it is not that, and yet we are never the nearer to tell what the thing really is. As if I would ask, What is an *infinite Attribute?* And he ſhould anſwer, A Perfection without bounds. What is a Spirit? A Being that hath no Fleſh and Bones. What Eternity? A *Duration without Beginning or End*. Do we underſtand Infinity, a Spirit, or Eternity, the better for all this? As ſuppoſe when the word Spirit is applied to God, Angels, and Souls departed; will the aboveſaid Definition give me any *clear, diſtinct*, and *adequate* Conception of it, and aſſign the difference between what it is in God, and what in a Creature, or what at all? A miſtake then it is in the thing, as well as a Contradiction in him; and the reaſon of this Blunder (next to a Carping-Diſpoſition of mind, watchful to take all advantages) is, that he was not aware

aware of the difference between *apprehend* and *comprehend*, and confounded *Existence* with *Essence*, *That* the thing is, with *what* the thing is. And of both of these he himself has given us a remarkable Instance.

For the Bishop having said, *If nothing is to be believed but what may be comprehended, the very Being of God must be rejected too.* P. 22. Our Author upon it makes this Observation, '*That the Attributes of God are Incomprehensible, I have often heard; but never till now what his Lordship adds in the next place, purely from himself, If nothing, saith he, is to be believed*, &c. But why is this *purely from himself?* For this admirable Reason, subjoyned by our Author, *To comprehend the Being or Existence of God, is only this, to comprehend that God is: and if we cannot comprehend that, all Religion ceases.* But how came that word *Existence* in? *To comprehend the Being or Existence of God is only this.* &c. For his Lordship has no other word than *Being*, which plainly there refers to the Nature, and not the Existence of the Almighty. So in the Paragraph just before, *It is Madness to pretend to comprehend what is Infinite*: And in the close of the same Paragraph, *As long as they believe an Infinite and Incomprehensible Being, it is Nonsense to reject any other Doctrine which relates to an Infinite Being, because it is Incomprehensible.* So that it's God, as an *Infinite and Incomprehensible* Being, that his Lordship is Discoursing of; not of his Existence, but his Essence and Nature. And yet we are not at an end of these Difficulties, were we to consider his Existence.

To return to the Bishop's first Proposition (as recited by our Author) *viz. God may justly require of us to believe what we cannot comprehend.* To what purpose is this? For our Author saith, *He* [the Bishop] *utterly mistakes, in thinking that we deny the Articles of the New Christianity, or* Athanasian *Religion* [concerning the Trinity, the Deity, and Incarnation of our Saviour, *&c.*] *because they are Mysteries, or because we do not comprehend them; we deny them, because they are Contradictions, Impossibilities, and pure Nonsense*, p. 4. *b.*

Surely this *New Christianity*, this *Athanasian Religion*, is no other than *Babylon* in the Revelation, that had *Mystery wrote on her Forehead*, that was *the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the whole Earth*; and deserves to be treated in like manner, if *she vends Imposture and Contradictions under the name of Mysteries*, as he represents it. But in defect of a Royal Authority to consummate the Sentence, there is a terrible Scourge, a Book

wrote by a *Learned Friend* of theirs, that hath wrought wonders, and with the like Succeſs as the Whips were ſhew'd to the *Sicilian* Slaves, to their utter Diſcomfiture. So that the *Merchants of theſe Wares* have their *Markets* ſpoiled, *or much hindred*, if he is to be believed. And yet after all, if we may gueſs at the Book by his Sample out of it, it's as gentle as one could wiſh; and falls in with his Adverſaries. For what doth he ſay, but what they have ſaid before him? As,

1. *There are in Religion ſome Myſteries, and Incomprehenſible Secrets.*

2. *We are not to give the venerable Name of Myſtery to Doctrines contrary to Nature's and Reaſon's Light.*

3. *The ordinary meaning of Myſtery in Scripture, is not ſomething in it's own nature dark and obſcure, but ſomething intelligible, and kept ſecret in paſt Ages, and was revealed in Goſpel-times.* But for all this, may not the word *Myſtery* be applied to ſuch things *as are in ſome meaſure known, but in much greater unknown to us* (as his Lordſhip ſaith)? And when our Author's Friend doth ſay, *the ordinary meaning of Myſtery in Scripture*, is for *what was a Secret*, but *now made known*; it ſuppoſes that he was ſenſible it was alſo ſometimes there us'd for what was in its *own nature dark and obſcure.* I thought to have purſued this Argument, but I the rather paſs it, becauſe it's under the Conſideration of a Learned Pen.

Amongſt the Inſtances that are Incomprehenſible, his Lordſhip begins with Eternity; and ſaith, That he is *apt to think, there is no greater Difficulty in the conception of the Trinity, and Incarnation, than there is of Eternity.* A bold Saying! And he deſerves to be expos'd for it. *Difficulties* the Biſhop calls them, but our Author will have it Contradictions, and *many Contradictions* in the Trinity and Incarnation; and inſinuates that his Lordſhip would himſelf have call'd his Difficulties in Eternity, Contradictions, if he durſt; For thus his Adverſary goes on, *He dares not call them Contradictions (though as he ſtates them they are undeniable Contradictions) becauſe if they were confeſs'd to be Contradictions, he would be forced to deny an Eternity.* And it is not long before we are told the Biſhop denies that alſo.

There are two Difficuties his Lordſhip obſerves in the Eterternity of God.

The firſt is, 'That *if God was for ever, he muſt be from himſelf; and what Notion can we have in our minds concerning it?*

Our

Our Author represents this, as if it was the Bishop's design to argue against God's Eternity, after this manner, *I am sorry an Eternal God must be a Contradiction. Had he no way to defend his New Mysteries, but by espousing the Cause of the Atheists?* &c.

A Calumny as black as Hell! For, is there any word leaning this way? What! to prove that there are Contradictions in the Notion of Eternity, or that an Eternal God is a Contradiction! Doth not his *Lordship* both affirm there is *great reason* to believe the Eternity of God, and in the same breath effectually prove it, and confute those *Atheists* whose *Cause* this Slanderer would have him to *espouse?* But this is his usual way of prefacing an Argument; the reason for it lies open enough.

But where is the Contradiction? At last it proves one of his own making. For, saith he, *What makes him* [the Bishop] *say, God must be from himself, or self-originated? For then he must be before he was.*

For God *to be before he was*, is a Contradiction. But I do not see how it follows, that *if he is from himself, he must be before he was?* For he may be *from himself*, and yet be necessarily and eternally Existent. This 'tis likely our Author saw, and therefore to clinch his Argument, he joyns an *alias* to the Phrase, *From himself*, and then it is *From himself, or Self-originated.* And now he has put a pretty varnish upon it; for *Self-originated*, if strictly taken, implies an Origine or Beginning *from himself:* And (as he saith) *All Origination of what kind soever is inconsistent with an Eternal Being.* If his Lordship had said, God had his Beginning or Origination *from himself*, or in his Adversarie's phrase were *Self-originated*, there had been some colour for him to have inferred, Then he *was in Being before he was.* But to be *from himself*, is no more liable to such an inference, than when we say he is Self-existent, or in the word used by the Fathers, Αὐτοθεὸς, *God of and from himself*, that is, so as to have no Cause nor Beginning.

The second Difficulty his Lordship proposed about God's Eternity, is, *How God should co-exist with all the differences of times, and yet there be no Succession in his own Being?— And Succession being not consistent with the Absolute Perfection of the Divine Nature, therefore God must be all at once what he is.*

This

This our Author saith, *is a great many Contradictions*, and proposes no less than Five Queries upon it, which he gives his Lordship time till Dooms-day to answer. For thus he closes them, *The Notion of the Trinity, and this Notion of Eternity, will be vindicated both in a Day.*

However we will try if the Day for it be not already come; and for trial's sake, I will venture to offer them again to the Reader, as they stand in his Treatise.

Q. 1. 'What is the difference between an *Eternal Moment*, '(which every one discerns is a Contradiction in the very terms) 'and between *possessing Eternal Life all at once*, which is his Lord-'ship's Definition of Eternity?

A. The difference is as great, as between Contradiction and Truth. An *Eternal Moment* is a Contradiction; for a *Moment* is a moveable point, and passes as soon into not being, as it came into being. It was not, it is, and immediately is not; and so nothing more opposite in the nature of it to Eternity. But Eternity admits no Succession, no Divisibility, no Moments, no Past, no Future, no Motion, no Change, and consequently must be all existent together, and *all at once*: For there is no mean between Succession, and *all at once*; and since Succession is imcompatible with Eternity, Eternity must be *all at once*. And if God did not *possess* himself *all at once*, he could not be Eternal.

Q. 2. 'Seeing it is of the Nature of all Duration to consist 'in a Succession, else it were not Duration but a Moment, I 'ask whether it be not unavoidable, that if Almighty God pos-'sesses Eternal Life *all at once*, he must have passed into some 'Durations before they are? The Duration, for example, 'in which the Day of Judgment shall be, is not actually come. 'But if God possesses Eternity all at once, he is already entred 'upon that Duration, that is, he is entred upon it before 'it is.

A. If it be *of the Nature of all Duration to consist in a Succession*, then there can be no more Duration than there is Succession in an Eternal Being: And consequently, 'tis a gross Absurdity to conceive of God, as *entring upon a certain Duration*, and *passing into some Duration*, which is to conceive of him as a Temporary Being, and that began to be, (for so it is in all Succession) and not as one that is Eternal.

Q. 3.

Q. 3. 'Seeing it is a Contradiction, and therefore impossible, that any Being should possess a Duration before such 'Duration is; I desire to know of his Lordship, how it can be 'an Imperfection (as he affirms) in the Divine Nature, not to do 'that which implies a Contradiction, *&c.*

A. 'Tis true, that it is *a Contradiction, and therefore impossible* for a Creature, to whom Duration and Succession belong, *to possess a Duration before such Duration is.*' But it is a Contradiction, and therefore impossible for God to possess any Duration (which *consists in Succession*) because he is Eternal. For him to possess a certain Duration and Succession, would be to suppose him in Duration *A*, before he removed to Duration *B*. and when he is in Duration *B*, to have left Duration *A*. Eternity in God, is with respect to Time, what Immensity is to Place; and so he is *all at once*, as he is at once in all places; and as notwithstanding the innumerable Divisions in place, God is no more divided, than he was before *Place* was created. So, notwithstanding the manifold distributions of time, God is no more in one Duration than in another, but is now the same Eternal undivided Being, when there is a *Before*, a *Present*, and an *After* in Time, as he was before there was any Time, Duration or Succession.

Q. 4. 'How is it more an Imperfection to pass from not be-'ing, into such a Duration, to such a Being in it, than 'tis an 'Imperfection to pass from not operating in such a Duration, 'to operating in it? This last all men must confess to be true 'of God; for none will dare to say, God made all his Works 'at once.

A. To pass from Duration to Duration, and from *not being in such a particular Duration to a Being in it*, is no other than Succession which (as has been shew'd) is utterly inconsistent with the Nature of God, who is Eternal.

To pass from not operating in such a Duration, to operating in it, is to suppose there was a Duration before God did operate in it, which is manifestly absurd. For Duration is a continuance of Time; but what Duration was there in Eternity, before there was any Time, or God began to operate and make the World?

Again, To argue from the Works of God to his Nature, is to circumscribe him to Time and Place, as they are. And he may as well argue, That God began to be, when he began to Operate,

Operate, as to argue from Succeſſion in the Creatures, or a Succeſſion of God's Operation in the Creatures, to a Succeſſion in Himſelf; and that he cannot be *all at once*, becauſe he did not make all his Works at once.

Q. 5. 'What ſhadow of Imperfection is it to paſs from one 'Duration to another, when the Perſon ſo paſſing, carries with 'him all perfections into every Duration?

A. If this were ſo, the Almighty would want one perfection of his Nature, which is Eternity. For he can no more *carry* his Eternity with him into the various Succeſſions of Duration, than he can paſs from place to place, and carry his Immenſity with him.

'Tis the Upſhot (I will not ſay the Deſign) of theſe his Queries to overthrow the Eternity of God, under colour of diſproving the Notion of the *Platoniſts and Boethius*, *the School-men and the Doctors*, *and Profeſſors of Myſteries in our Times*, (as he derives its Pedigree, and is pleaſed to give their Character) *viz.* That *Eternity is a poſſeſſion of all at once*: And ſo turns all the bitter Invectives upon himſelf, with which he ſo virulently, and without any pretext endeavours to wound his Adverſary. For what elſe is the effect of his Doctrine of Succeſſion in God, and paſſing from one Duration to another? For where there is Succeſſion, there was a beginning, unleſs he will make the firſt *Moment* in his Succeſſion to be *Eternal*, which he knows is a *Contradiction in Terms*.

The Two remaining Difficulties which his Lordſhip offers to our Conſideration, and to ſhew how incomprehenſible things are, are the Spirituality of God's Nature, and his Preſcience.

To the former he makes no other Reply, than to diſavow (if it is ſo) what was charged upon ſome of their Way about God's Corporeity.

As to the latter, nothing will ſerve his turn, but that the Biſhop *oppoſes the Unity of God* (*that envied Doctrine*) *by finding Contradictions in his Eternity and Foreknowledge*.

But what if the Bloody Charge fall upon *Socinus*, who found the *Difficulties*, and as he thought, the *Contradictions* in the Doctrine of God's *Preſcience* to be ſo great, intrenching upon the Freedom of Humane Actions, and making God the Author of Sin; that he thought it the better way wholly to deny it. But this our Author is very careful to ſuppreſs.

2. Propoſition,

2. Proposition. 'The difficulties, saith his Lordship, are in 'point of reason more insuperable in the *Socinian* way than 'ours; of which he gives several Instances that may be called '*Mysteries*.

1. The Mystery on the part of the Orthodox, is the Eternal Son of God's being with the Father before the World was made by him.

The Mystery on the other side is, 'That although Jesus were born Six months after *John Baptist*, yet he was in dignity before him. Now this, saith the Bishop, is a Mystery; forasmuch as it cannot be conceived that the Evangelist should, in *lofty expressions, and profound language*, prove a thing which was never disputed.

It is St. *John* that is referr'd to, and if he may be esteemed the Author of that Gospel, yet our Author *cannot find that profound language and lofty expressions in him. The sense indeed*, saith he, *is sometimes profound, but the expression is always mean.*

So little judgment had *Friend Amelius*, when at the first reading he thought the Barbarian (as he call'd that Divine Evangelist) to Platonize; and in his *profound language* to imitate his great Master. Indeed our Author rather thinks of a Character befitting a Rhetorician, Orator, or Poet, than a Philosopher or Divine Writer. As if because the Evangelist had not an *elevation of conceit or expression*, like or *above the Greek or Roman Orators*, or Poets, his *language* could not be *profound*, nor *his expressions lofty.*

2. Saith he, *If the language were profound, it would not follow, the Sense intended must be a Mystery.* But it would follow, that St. *John* that wrote of such sublime things, after that manner, would not take pains to *prove what was never disputed*, viz. *that although Christ were born six months after John Baptist, yet he was in dignity before him.*

At last, by head and shoulders, he brings in a Paraphrase of the *Socinians* on the beginning of St. *John*, which has already been consider'd; but because I am not willing to be behind-hand with him, I shall repay it with another, borrowing some help towards it from his own Exposition, *viz.*

'In the beginning of the Gospel, the *Word* Jesus Christ be-'ing about 30 years old, was then in being and alive: And 'about that time was rapt up into Heaven, as St. *Paul* was,

'which we are piously to believe, being the Scripture is silent 'in it. And after a very short stay there, but so long as it 'may be said, he *was with God*, this *Word* came down again from 'Heaven, which we are upon the same consideration to believe, 'as his former Ascension. And then or some time after, perhaps 'at his Resurrection, he was constituted a God, not an Eternal 'God, but a Man-God, a Creature-God, a finite temporary 'God, that dates the beginning of his Deity from the term 'aforesaid. And being thus a God, he made a New World, as 'the Eternal God made the Old. And though he had *nothing 'in him of the Divine Nature, (for that God could not give him) 'nor any of the Incommunicable Attributes of the Deity, Omnipotence, 'Omnipresence, Omniscience*, and such like. (Wherefore *'tis better 'to use the words Christ, Lord and Saviour, than God*, because there 'may be no *small inconvenience with respect to the Vulgar*) yet he 'was to have the same honour given him by Angels and men, 'which they gave to the Father, the Eternal, Omnipotent, 'Omnipresent, and Omniscient God. And to encourage them 'in this, they are to know, that *Faustus Socinus had cause to think*, 'that his Unkle *Lælius* had, *by many prayers obtained from Christ 'himself a very dextrous and admirable Interpretation of a difficult 'place in St.* John.

Now this I take to be an unintelligible *Mystery*, and fit to be put to that, That *although Christ Jesus were born six months after* John, *yet he was in dignity before him.*

But here he saith they have on their side *the principal Criticks of the* Trinitarians, *particularly* Erasmus *and* Beza, who understand the Phrase, *For he was before me*, John 1. 15. *of a priority of dignity and excellence, not of a priority of time.*

Admit this for the present, then the sense of that place will amount to this, *He that cometh after me, is preferr'd before me; for he was preferr'd before me:* Or, *He that cometh after me, is more excellent than me; for he was more excellent than me.* Thus St. *Chrysostom* expounds ἔμπροσθέν μου, *is preferr'd before me*, by λαμπρότερος, ἐντιμότερος, *more excellent, more honourable.*

2. The Mystery on the Orthodox side is, 'That a Divine Per- 'son should assume Humane Nature, and so the *Word* be made 'Flesh. The Mystery on the other side is, 'That an Attribute 'of God, his Wisdom or Power, is made Flesh; that is, for 'an Accident to be made a Substance.

In Answer to this our Author saith,

1. *By*

1. *By the Word we do not understand God the Son; the rather, because no such person is once mentioned in all Holy Scripture.*

Answ. If that were a Reason sufficient why the *Word* in that Proposition, *The Word was made Flesh*, should not be understood of God the Son; then 'tis as much a Reason why the *Word* in the first *Verse* should not be understood of God the Son: But if notwithstanding that no such person is once mentioned in Scripture as *God the Son*, yet the *Word* in *Verse* 1. is to be understood of a person; then notwithstanding that, *Verse* 10. may as well be understood in like manner of the Personal *Word*. But is no such person ever mentioned in Scripture, as *God the Son*? What is the *Word* but the Son of God, and when the *Word* and the *Son* are the same, what is the difference between *God the Word*, and *God the Son*? And when the Son is called God in Scripture, what is the difference between *God the Son*, and *the Son that is God*?

2. But what do they understand by the *Word*, when the *Word* is said to be *made Flesh*?

He answers, *The Power and Wisdom of God.*

Now if so; where then is the Fault, when the Bishop charges it upon them as *a Mystery beyond all Comprehension*, that they say that *an Attribute of God, his Wisdom or Power, is made Flesh*?

Here he comes in again with his, *We do not mean hereby, as his* Lordship *would insinuate, that the Wisdom or Power of God was turned into Flesh, or Man.*

Now this is more than his Adversary charges them with: But what do they *mean*?

Why, *We mean*, saith he, *as the* Trinitarians *thereby also mean, that the Word was Incarnate, tabernacled in Flesh, abode on the Man Christ Jesus in more ample manner, and much larger measure, than on former Prophets.*

Answ. If they mean, *By made Flesh, as the* Trinitarians *themselves also mean*; then they must mean, that the Wisdom and Power of God is Incarnate, and took upon it the Flesh and Nature of Man; or else they do not mean by that Phrase as the *Trinitarians* do. But suppose we give him back again what he has granted, and allow that they do not mean as the *Trinitarians* mean, when they say, the *Word was Incarnate*; but that they mean, the *Word abode on the Man Christ Jesus*; that is, the Word, Power, or Wisdom, abode on the *Word* Christ; yet how comes he from the *Word's tabernacling in flesh*, or *was made flesh*, to interpret it, *abode in Christ*. Methinks there is much of *Mystery* in this.

But I have not yet done; for tho he saith, *The Language and Expression of St.* John *is always mean*, yet I apprehend St. *John* to be consistent with himself, and to write intelligibly.

But our Author brings all this into question, by a forced Interpretation, and setting up his own meaning against that of St. *John*; as will appear to *any indifferent man*, from the Connection and Order of this Chapter; whether it be the part before *verse* 14. or that which follows.

Before; for thus the Evangelist proceeds, *In the Beginning was the Word,* ——And that *Word was the true Light.* ——And *the Word was made Flesh.* So that the *Word* that *was made Flesh*, was the same that was *the true light*, and that was *in the beginning*. And therefore if by the *Word* that was

made Flesh, is to be understood *the Power and Wisdom of God*, then so it is to be understood when the *Word* is said to be *in the beginning*, after this manner; In the Beginning was the Power of God, and the Power of God was with God, and the Power of God was God

Let us consult the Words following the Clause, [*the Word was made flesh*] and it will be yet more evident; *The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the father*, &c. *John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake*, &c.

So that the same *Word* that was made flesh, dwelt among them; the same *Word* that was made flesh, and dwelt among them, and whose Glory they saw, was the only begotten of the Father. The same *Word* that was made flesh, and dwelt among them, was he of whom *John* bare witness. Now if the whole Tenor of that Discourse, before and after, belong to the Personal *Word*, then so doth the Clause between; or else he will make St. *John* write so as no Intelligent Writer can be supposed to write.

3. The Mystery on the side of the Orthodox, is, That the Son of God '*came down from Heaven*, and took our Nature upon him. The Mystery on the other side is, 'That *Christ should be rapp'd up into Heaven.*

This Mystery of theirs our Author will have to be no more *difficult* than St. *Paul*'s being *caught up into the third heaven*: And so far he is in the right; for that was no more impossible than this, and Christ might have ascended before his Ministry, as well as after his Resurrection. But this is not the Mystery that his Lordship lays his hand upon; but it is this, That in a matter of so great Consequence, and so remarkable a Part of History (if it had been true) the Scripture should be wholly silent; that when it is so punctual in the relation of *Moses*'s Converse with God at the giving of the Law, and of our Saviour's Forty Days Temptation in the Wilderness, and his Transfiguration, *&c.* that there should be no more said of this Ascension of our Saviour, than of the Virgin *Mary*'s Assumption, tho (as they would have it) it was to receive Instructions *in the Will of God concerning the Gospel-Dispensation*; and when he was constituted and made a God, (as some of them say.) This is a *Mystery*. But I acknowledge that the invention of this is a new *Mystery*; it being apparent, that it was by them thought necessary to make some tolerable sense of these words, *He came down from Heaven*, as his *Lordship* observes of this before.

As for the *Mystery* on the other side, we acknowledge it to be so, but not for the Reason he gives, because to descend or ascend *belongs only to Limited and Finite Beings*. Since notwithstanding that, God in Scripture is said to *go down*, that that is not to be understood of a local Descent, but of a manifestation of the Deity. And the Son of God is said to come down from Heaven when he became Man, because he took the Humane Nature into Union with the Divine; and where the Humane was, there was also the Divine.

4. The Mystery on the Orthodox side is, 'That God should become 'Man by taking our Nature upon him.

The Mystery on the other side is, 'That Man should become God, *&c.*

In

In the former, an Infinite is united to a Finite; in the latter, a Finite becomes Infinite.

Our Author saith, the Bishop *found it necessary to misinterpret their Doctrines, before he could find Mysteries in it.*

A. But surely he doth not misreport their Doctrine, when he saith, That they make a Man to be God. Our Author is very tender in the Point, and saith *he may be called a God*; and saith, That *it cannot be satisfactorily proved, that any Authentick Copies of the Bible do give to him the Title, God.* But *Socinus*, and his Followers, are not sparing to call him a *True God*, and to give him Divine Worship as such (as has been shewed); and I question whether our Author can say more about the *Authentick Copies* than *Sandius*, which has been sufficiently confuted before he published his *Brief History*,

2. As for what our Author saith concerning the case of *Moses, Magistrates* and *Angels* being called God: I ask, whether any of them may be called a *True God.* For if *Moses* was, for example, as much a God as Christ, he might have, and challenge the same Divine Worship as is given, and is due to Christ.

5. The Mystery on the side of the Orthodox is, 'That Christ suffered for our sakes; as a voluntary Sacrifice of Expiation of the Sins of Mankind, and not for his own sake.

The Mystery on the other side is, 'To make him suffer as one wholly 'innocent; which is, to make the most innocent persons as apprehensive 'of suffering as the most guilty.

Here our Author interposes, and saith, *His* Lordship *seems not to understand the state of the Question*, because he had said, *'Tis more reasonable to believe that Jesus Christ suffered for our sakes, than for his own. Whereas he suffer'd for both; for his own sake, to obtain a glorious reward*, &c.

Answ. It is plain, that when his *Lordship* saith, *Christ suffer'd for our sake, and not for his own*; he means thereby, not for his own sake, as he did for ours; for our Sins, and not for any of his own: so it immediately follows, *We are all agreed, that the Sufferings of Christ were far beyond any thing he deserv'd at God's hands.*

2. He saith, *The* Unitarians *never denied, as his* Lordship *here fancies, that Jesus Christ made himself a voluntary Sacrifice for Expiation of the Sins of Mankind.*

Answ. Let us suppose this, what is it then they deny? *They deny*, he saith, *that this Sacrifice was by way of true and proper Satisfaction, or full and adequate payment to the Justice of God.*

A. That there might be a Sacrifice of Expiation where there was no *full and adequate payment to the Justice of God*, is true, because *it is not possible*, saith the Apostle, *that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.* But the case is not the same in this Sacrifice, (for that which is denied to the former, is yet granted and given to the Sacrifice of Christ, *Heb.* 10. 4, 10.) which may not improperly be called a *Satisfaction* and *Payment*; and if so, in regard of the Dignity of the Person, may be said to be *full* and *adequate*; since as Sins are called *Debts*, so Sinners are Debtors

to

to the Justice of God's Law, in respect of which we are said to be *redeemed* by the *Blood* of Christ, as Captives or condemned persons were redeemed by Silver and Gold, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19.

But yet we are not come to the bottom of their Doctrine; for when we might reasonably have thought the controversy to be at an end (since they grant that *Christ was an Expiatory Sacrifice for our Sins*) they take all away again by an Explication that makes the Sacrifice no Sacrifice, and the Expiation no Expiation.

For he thus determines the Point.

3. *We say this Sacrifice* (*as all other Sacrifices*) *was only an Oblation or Application to the Mercy of God.* Or as it follows, *He suffered for our sakes, that he might recommend us to the Mercy and Forgiveness of God.*

A. I have said before, by this account of an Expiatory Sacrifice, the Expiation is no Expiation; for the Definition here given of an Expiatory Sacrifice, is this, that *'tis only an Oblation, Application, or Recommendation of a Person to the Mercy and Forgiveness of God.*

Now that can be no Definition of a thing, which is as well applicable to a thing of another Nature, as to the thing defined: And that is the Case here, for according to this Definition of an Expiatory Sacrifice, Intercession would be such a Sacrifice.

For it may be thus described, Intercession is *only an Oblation, Application, or Recommendation of another to the Mercy and Forgiveness of God.* So that in effect, an Expiatory Sacrifice is no other than an Intercession. And then indeed we, and I think Mankind (except our Author, and those of his way) have been under a great mistake, that have been taught, that Sacrifices of Expiation were instead of the Offender, in whose Sufferings he was reputed to suffer, and upon whose Sufferings and Penal Death, he was supposed to be in a respect discharged.

6. The Mystery on the part of the Orthodox is, 'That the Son of God 'took upon him the Form of a Servant for our advantage. The Mystery on the other side is, 'That a meer Man should be exalted to the Honour 'and Worship which belongs only to God.

As to the former our Author replies,

'Tis more reasonable to suppose with the *Unitarians*, that God hath 'admitted us to Conditions of Pardon and Favour, for his own mercy's 'sake, and in contemplation of the unblemish'd Life, and voluntary Suf-'ferings and Sacrifice of Christ Jesus; than to suppose with his Lordship, 'and his Party, that God himself took on him the Form of a Servant, 'and suffer'd in our steads, to reconcile us to himself.

Answ. 1. He might as well suppose, that 'tis more reasonable that God should admit us to Conditions of Pardon and Favour, for his own mercy's sake, than for the Sufferings and Sacrifice of Christ. For what needed such a Sacrifice, and the Son of God to be exposed to such Extremities, when God could have pardoned men for his own mercy's sake, as well without these Sufferings of Christ, as without a *Satisfaction.*

2. What he supposes is very absurd that *God should admit us to Conditions of Pardon, upon the contemplation of the voluntary Sacrifice of Christ*; and yet that he did *not suffer in our stead*, nor *to reconcile us to God.* For Substitution,

tution, or to die in the stead of another, is of the nature of an Expiatory Sacrifice: And he might as well say, Christ is our Intercessor without mediating for us; as that he was our Sacrifice, and not be sacrificed for us; or be a Sacrifice for us, and yet not suffer in our stead.

3. 'Tis not more reasonable to suppose God admitted us to Conditions of Pardon for his own mercy's sake, than it is to suppose that he suffer'd in our steads, and to reconcile us to God: For that is not unreasonable which hath God for its Author.

But will he say, the difficulty is not yet solved; for 'tis God's Reconciling us to *himself*, and Suffering for *himself*, and Paying to *himself* the Debt of the Debtor, and Satisfying the wrong done *to himself*? Which saith he is a *Mock-satisfaction, such a ridiculous Scene, that begets Laughter or Contempt in considering men.* Surely he means such as himself, that writes *Considerations.*

Our Author is so used to forget himself, to leave out, put in, or alter, that he can no more slip an occasion, (how small soever) than those that are used to another way, can let go an opportunity, though it be but a a Petty-larceny. Thus he saith, *His Lordship and his Party suppose that God himself suffer'd in our steads, as well as took on him the Form of a Servant.*

Now to say the truth, his Lordship had not this Scene in his eye under *Mystery* the 6th; for in that he is speaking of the Incarnation of our Saviour, when he took on him the Form of a Servant; but it was in *Mystery* the 5th that he spoke of Christ's Sufferings and Sacrifice.. His Lordships words are, *The Son of God took upon him the Form of a Servant*; so that he was so far from saying, *God suffer'd in our stead*, &c. that he did not so much as say, *the Son of God suffer'd in our stead*, (though it be true.)

But will he say, Is not this all one, when he that suffer'd and died, is, in our opinion, God as well as Man?

I answer No, with respect to his *Observations.*

For restore *Son of God* to its place (as it is in *his Lordship*) instead of God, and then we shall see the difference.

As 1. 'Tis more reasonable to suppose with the *Unitarians*, that God hath admitted us to Terms of Pardon for his own mercy's sake, *&c.* than that *his Son* should suffer in our stead, to reconcile us to God.

2. It's an Incomprehensible Mystery, that God should rather chuse to send *his Son* to suffer for us, than to forgive us.

3. 'Tis a *Paradox*, for the *Son of God* to pay the Debt of the Debtor to God, and to satisfy for the wrong done to Him.

How is the *Scene* changed upon this? And where doth the Absurdity lie? While indeed he put God in the place of the *Son of God*, it look'd somewhat speciously; but restore the term *Son of God* to its place instead of God, and the pretended Absurdity lies apparently at his own door.

But may he urge, Don't you acknowledge the Son of God to be God? And then it may be as well said, *God himself suffer'd in our stead*, &c. as the *Son of God suffer'd*, &c.

I answer, God (as that signifies the Divine Nature in Christ) could not suffer: All that we say is, That the person that took upon himself the Form of a Servant was God, and not Man, before such an Assumption of Humane

Humane Nature: that when he assumed that Nature, he was God as well as Man; and that person who was God suffer'd in Humane Nature, but the Godhead or God no more suffer'd and died when Christ died, than the Manhood could be Omnipresent and Immortal, because the Godhead was so; or the Soul die, when the Man is said to die.

2. I answer further, That the Son of God is not the Father; and that there being such an incommunicable personality, if I may so speak, those things belong to the Son that could not belong to the Father. And as the Father was not Incarnate but the Son, so the Son became responsible, and paid the price of our Redemption to the Father; and therefore it was the Act of the Son that was God, and not of the Godhead, as common to three persons to reconcile us to God.

As to the Mystery on their own side, the Worship of a *meer Man*, it has been already consider'd, only he should have had some moderation in his Charge, when he saith his Lordship *might as well have accus'd them of Sodomy or Witchcraft, as of giving proper Divine Worship to a Creature, to the Man Christ Jesus*; when his Party owns it, and he himself makes a feeble Excuse for it. For, saith he, *if it is a mistake, 'tis simple Error, not Mystery, much less Idolatry*. Now, methinks, 'tis an unintelligible Mystery, that *there should be a proper Divine Worship*, peculiar to God; and yet there be no Idolatry in giving the same to a Creature. 'Tis an *Incomprehensible Mystery* again to say, the *giving proper Divine Worship to a Creature, is not Idolatry*.

'Tis a Mystery again, That the Church of *Rome* should be charged with Idolatry, for giving Divine Worship to Creature-Mediators, and yet in these persons 'tis *simple Error*.

'Tis a Mystery again, That Christ should be esteemed by them a God, and so constituted by God, and yet there be *no small Inconvenience with respect to the Vulgar* to have him so called.

'Tis a Mystery again, That St. *Paul blames them who do service to such as are not Gods*: And yet *if God himself had set them up, and given them the Name above every Name, and they had not mistook in the kind, nor exceeded in the degree of that service they did to them, they should not have been blamed*. And so the Saints and Angels might have been made Objects of Worship as well as Christ, and the Virgin *Mary* might have been established *Queen of Heaven*, and a *Hyperdulia* accordingly given to her.

So that he has made as pretty a Defence in this Part for the Creature-Worship of the Church of *Rome*, as their heart can wish, and as he has made for *Transubstantiation* in the next Part.

3d Proposition is, 'The way or manner of saving Sinners by Christ, 'taught by the Church, is more for the Benefit of Mankind, than the *Socinian Hypothesis*.

This I shall be as short upon as he; and till I see an Answer to what his Lordship has said, and was also said by the Archbishop upon that Argument, I shall rest contented, and not think the Proposition evertheless true or pertinent, for his saying *'Tis neither true, nor to the purpose*.

TO

To the Reverend Dr. WILLIAMS.

Reverend Sir,

I Understand that you are now about a *Vindication of the late Archbishop of* Canterbury's *Sermons concerning the Trinity, in Answer to the Animadversions that were made upon them.* I am very glad so great an Argument is in so Good a hand: But since the *Animadverter* gave a late *Discourse* of mine a share of the same Book, I think it may be proper, that somewhat in Justification of what I writ, should accompany this Performance of yours: And because every Man is naturally more the Master of his own Thoughts than another, though in other respects he may be much Superior to him; I shall therefore give you a particular account of what occurs to me, with relation to my *Discourse* on this Subject, and shall leave it to you, either to Publish it with your Book, in the same simplicity in which I am forced to Write at this distance from my Books and Collections, or which will be much to the advantage of what I am to offer to you, though it may put you to a little more trouble, I leave it to you to draw such things out of this Paper as seem of the greatest weight, and mix them with your own Composition. By this they will appear with those solid Characters of true Judgment and Learning, by which all your Writings are distinguished.

I shall without any farther preamble, enter upon the matter that is before me; and shall in the first place offer you some general Considerations, before I come to what is more particular and Critical. The Foreign Writers of this Author's Persuasion, have indeed in their way of Writing, set a pattern to the world: Their Stile has been Grave and Modest, free from Reflection or Levity. They have pursued their Point with a Strain that deserves great Commendation. But those who have taken

great liberties with them, have said, That this was only an Artifice to soften the Horror that their Opinions were apt to give; and to possess the world with such favourable thoughts of their Persons and Doctrines, as might both remove Prejudices, and dispose all men to believe well of those who seemed full of a Christian Spirit; and they have been apt to suspect, that as their Numbers and their Hopes might encrease, they would change their Stile, and raise their Spirits. This Writer has done what lay in him, to justify those suspicions. It seems he thinks the Party is now so strong, that the hard words of *Nonsense*, *Contradiction*, and *Absurdity*, may be let fly liberally; though upon so grave a Subject, Modester Words would have imported full as much, and would have had a much better appearance. He loves also to divert himself as oft as he can:

P. 90. I had in the general part of my Discourse said, *That since there may be Mysteries in the Divine Essence that are far beyond all our Apprehensions; therefore if God lets out any* hints *of any such to us, we are to receive them in such a plain sense as the words do naturally bear.* From hence he runs division upon the word *hint*; and studies to make the whole appear ridiculous: Though when I come to

Conf. p. 20, 21. treat of the proofs that ought to be relied on in this matter, I had laid this down for a ground, *That in so sublime a Point,*

P. 109. *there ought to be a greater fulness of express words, than for bare precepts of Morality, or more easily received Notions: And that we ought not to suppose, that if God intended to Reveal any thing to us that should pose our Understandings, he would only do it in* hints, *or in Words and Expressions of doubtful Signification, and that therefore those who denied Mysteries, had a right to demand full and Copious Proofs of them.* The taking notice of this would have been more sincere, but some of the *mirth* into which *hints* led him, would have been spoiled by it. I mention no other Strains of this sort, though he does often with the same *Candour* and *Modesty* endeavour to make those he writes against look Ridiculous; which is pursued so flatly, that one would think that the Civil and more Artificial Words with which he begins his Con-

Conf. p. 15. siderations, were writ by another Pen, but were in the Management spoiled by his own.

To pass over his many indecent Reflections, especially when nothing of that sort was used, to give a Provocation or Colour for such returns; there is another imputation of a much higher nature,

Nature, which deserves a severer Expostulation. He frequently Reflects on the *Awe*, and other *Biasses*, and *Interests*, that he apprehends *are* the Considerations which engage men to persist in the Persuasions which he writes against. This is, with a slight disguise, to say, that because the Law would turn Men out of their Benefices, if they owned the contrary Doctrine, therefore to save these, they not only Speak and Write, but Worship God in Acts that are plainly against their Consciences. This is often repeated, though perhaps more broadly in the other Considerations, than in those that relate to my self. I reckon my self to be equally involved with my Brethren in the Imputation; and will therefore Answer it with the solemnity that so grave a matter requires: I call God to witness, how unjust, as well as black, this Accusation is. If I did not sincerely Believe this Doctrine, I should think it a horrid Prevaricating with God and man, to make Confessions which I do not Believe, and to join in Acts of Worship which I think Idolatrous. No man of Conscience can think himself clear of so Criminal an Imputation by holding his Peace, when those Confessions of Faith are made; his Standing up to them, nay, his continuing in the Communion of the Church that uses them, is a plain avowing of them: And he must live and die in a state of Damnation, who can make those Professions, and continue in such solemn Acts of Worship, when all this is a lying both to God and man. *Conf. p. 19. 23.*

The blackest part of the charge of Idolatry which we lay on the Church of *Rome*, is a mild thing compared to this, if true. Here is not only material, but formal Idolatry committed in the highest Instances possible, if we Worship One as the Great God, whom we believe to be but a mere Creature. A man who can upon any consideration whatsoever, sell himself at this rate, can have neither Conscience nor Religion; no Sincerity, nor true Piety: If this insinuation carried only a Personal Reflection on our selves; though the injustice of it be very great, yet it might be more easily passed over, if it were not for the great advantage it gives to Atheistical and Prophane Minds, who are inclined enough to think that all the Professions of Religion which men make, are only matters of *Custom* or of *Interest*: These are now fortified as much as the Credit of this Writer can amount to. When some Per-

sons of whom the world has not otherwise had very ill impressions, are represented as *over-aw'd* and *biass'd* by *Interest*, to go against their Conscience, and to lye daily to God, and deceive the world by false Professions; no wonder that Religion it self should pass for a Cheat, if things of this nature could be generally believed. Men who could sell and stifle their Consciences at this rate, might as well deliver themselves up to all Immoralities, and should make no scruple to go over to all the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, where they might make the better bargain, and be much less guilty than this Writer would make us seem to be. God, who knows the sincerity of our Hearts and of our Professions, will I hope both clear us from so base an Imputation, and forgive those who either lay it on us themselves, or do too easily believe it upon the suggestions of others.

Conf. 29. 30. As in this, so in several other respects our *Socinians* seem to be serving the Designs of the Atheists. This Writer is not contented to weaken the Credit of the Books that are believed to be S. *John's*; but studies to make the whole *Bible* pass for a vitiated and corrupted Book; and that these Corruptions are as ancient as *Epiphanius*'s time; because that Father speaks of *some places that were found in the Copies that had not been Corrected*; upon which he concludes, That *some have been Modelling the common Bibles far above Twelve hundred years.* This is the very Plea of the *Mahometans*, who do not deny the bulk of the Christian Religion, which is acknowledged in the *Alcoran*, they only say that the New Testament is much altered from what it was at first, the Christians having put in and left out a great deal of it: Or to use this Writers word, they having *modelled* it anew. If this be as true, as it is boldly asserted, there is indeed very little regard due to that Volume, about which he thinks there has been so much dishoneſt Dealing; and that for so many Ages. The opening this matter, he thinks would *raze the very Foundations of* Babylon; He might have rather said of the Christian Religion. For if the Books that are the Text of it are so mangled, what certainty is there left about any part of it? He does not seem to design this as a Service to the Church of *Rome*; where the currant Doctrine is, that no Submission is due to the Scriptures, but as they are attested and explained by the Church; tho' the great Pains he takes to excuse

excuſe Tranſubſtantiation, looks very kindly towards them.

The true Conſequence of this muſt be, that the Scripture may (perhaps) contain many good things: But that we are ſure of nothing concerning it; ſince it has had ſo ſtrange a fate upon it for ſo long a time. This is to be anſwered only by attacking him as a downright *Deiſt*, by proving that we have the Scriptures Genuinely conveyed down to us. The Attempts of a *Mercenary Critick* on this Head ought not to paſs upon us; who know how little regard he has to any Religion. No doubt there was anciently great Care taken to compare the Manuſcripts of the Bible In ſome Copies, Marginal Notes and Gloſſes might have been mixt with the Text; and Copied out as a part of it: And that might be diſcovered by other more Correct Copies. This is all that can be gathered from *Epiphanius*'s words; how much further ſoever an impious Critick may endeavour to ſtretch them. There is no harm done by attacking our Tranſlation; or by ſhewing the various Readings of ſome Copies, and endeavouring to eſtabliſh the true Reading, from ancient Copies or Quotations: but it ſtrikes at the whole, to accuſe all the Copies now extant, as having been long vitiated by Fraud, and on Deſign.

I ſhall offer you but one other general Conſideration, on that part of this Writers Book, in which he thinks he has the greateſt advantage given him. Becauſe there have been ſome different Methods taken, in explaining the *Trinity*, in which ſome ſeem to have adhered ſo much to the *Unity* of the Deity, that their *Trinity* ſeems unconceivable; while others have aſſerted ſuch a *Trtnity* as ſeems inconſiſtent with *Unity*, he repreſents us all as ſo divided and broken, that we agree in nothing, but in the maintaining of ſome Terms and Phraſes againſt them: in which we have very different Apprehenſions from one another. *Conſ. p.* 18.

This ſeems to give Scandal to ſome good minds, as well as advantage to bad ones: and therefore it ought to be well explained. There is then a great difference to be made between that which is a part of our Religion, and thoſe Conceptions by which we may more diſtinctly ſet it forth, both to our ſelves and others. To make this more ſenſible by Inſtances that are forreign to this Matter: Many Proteſtants have different Apprehenſions concerning the manner of Chriſt's Preſence in the Sacrament;

Sacrament; some asserting *Consubstantiation*, others *a real Presence*, and others only *a Figurative one*: But all agreeing, That this is a Sacred Institution of Christ's, accompanied with a Divine Vertue and Blessing, to those who worthily receive it, by which the Benefits of the Death of Christ are conveyed to them; they are all of the same Religion, who do agree in this, tho' they have different Methods of apprehending and explaining the matter. In like manner, as to the Decrees and Providence of God; some think that all arises from the Antecedent and fixed Acts of God; whereas others believe that a foresight of all future Events is to be considered as Antecedent to those Acts: Upon these two Suppositions, there seem to be very different Ideas formed of the *Power*, *Wisdom*, *Justice*, *Goodness*, and *Truth* of God, and yet all who confess a Providence, who adore it, submit to it, and depend upon it, are of the same Religion; for in these consists Religion with Relation to Providence. Religion being the Sense that we have of God and Divine Matters, by which our minds go towards him, in Acts conform to it. Therefore all those who do worthily receive the Sacrament, or sincerely acknowledge Providence, have the same Religion upon these Heads, how different soever their Explanations of them may be. So as to this great Point, all those who worship God as *One*, and who do also worship the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, together with the *Father*, as God, have truly the same Religion, the same Acts of Piety and Adoration; tho' some of them may have different ways of explaining either the *Unity* of the Essence, or the *Trinity* of the Persons. If this is well weighed, I hope it will put an end to the Insultings of some, and the Offences of others.

I confess the less men go into Explanations, it will be the better, and the less liable to censure: unless it be to offer such Illustrations, as rather shew how a thing may be explained, than affirm how it ought to be explained: And therefore since *God is unsearchable, and past finding out*, to Perfection, the best Method is to consider what is the clear meaning of these Texts of Scripture, that declare any of those Depths to us, and to judge of them according to the plain Importance of the Words, examining that by the Context, the Stile and Phraseology of the Scriptures, and by all the other Indications by which we may find out their true meaning.

This

This leads me to the first Remark that I shall make on this Writer's Considerations which fall on me, and on that part of my Discourse that relates to Mysteries in General. He yields that there may be great Difficulties in some things, of the truth of which we do not doubt; but then, says he, we are well assured that these things are truly so: whereas some *Ambiguous words of Scripture* cannot give us such an assurance concerning pretended Mysteries. But all that I aimed at in this part of my Discourse was, that if any such things should happen to be revealed to us in the Scriptures, that then we should be bound to believe them; notwithstanding all Objections to the contrary: as we believe the Objects of Sense and Reason, tho' we cannot answer all those Difficulties that arise about them; for if we are once sure that such Books are come from God, and that they are faithfully handed down to us; then, unless we will submit to an infallible Tribunal, we must trust our own Reasons with the finding out of the true and plain meaning of them: When that is found out, we are as much bound to believe it, as we can be to believe any of the Objects of Sense: since this is laid down for a truth, contested by none, that God is the *God of Truth, and cannot lie.* There lies no Exception against any part of this Discourse; since it runs all upon the Supposition, that the thing is clearly revealed in the Scripture; and that yet there lie as unanswerable Difficulties against it, as against those Truths which our Senses or Reasons do attest to us. *Conf. p. 19,*

The excursion made by him to excuse Transubstantiation, is not so much meant in favour of it, as in opposition to these (pretended) *Mysteries*; but indeed it is so little to the purpose, that it seems to me not to deserve to be examined. My words are not faithfully reported by him; for whereas I had said, That we had the *fullest evidence of sense against it, in an object of sense*; he has left out *fullest*, and then diverts himself by shewing how the Evidence of *Sense* may be mistaken; as in an Oar that appears crooked in Water, with other Instances of the like force; whereas all this had failed, if he had considered the Importance of the word *fullest*, that is, an Evidence given with all the Exactness, and after all the Corrections that *Sense* can lay before us. *Sense* it self has led us into a whole Theory of Refractions, according to the Medium through which *Conf. p. 21, 22.* *P. 54.*

which we see an Object pass: What he says about Accidents, is too slight to be remarked: We see the same Objects in the same manner after their pretended Transubstantiation, that we saw before it; therefore either our *Senses* are not infallible in their strictest application to their proper Objects, or they are as true after Transubstantiation as they were before it. The Inference after all that he would draw from what he says upon this Head, shall be easily acknowledged by me; That where the Evidence of *Reason* is as plain and full against an Object of *Reason*, as the Evidence of *Sense* is here concerning an Object of *Sense*, that there we have very good ground to reject it. If it were pretended that God were both *One* and *Three* in the same respect, the Evidence of *Reason* against this is so clear, that I acknowledge that no Authority whatsoever ought to induce us to believe it: But if it is revealed that the same Being is both *One* and *Three*, then since the Notion of *Unity* is capable of such difference, since also that of *diversity* is of the same largeness, and since the same Being may be *One* in one respect, and *More* in another; this opposition between such *Unity* and such *Trinity*, is no proper Object of *Reason*, nor can *Reason* give us a full Evidence, much less the *fullest* against it.

P. 93.

I think there remains nothing to be considered on this Head, except the Scorn with which he treats me; which I thank God I can very easily bear, and will make no returns. He might after all, treat those Matters for which so many Persons of Worth and Learning have so particular a Veneration, with more Modesty. It seems he thought a Boldness of Expression, and a Scorn of his Adversaries, would have some effect on ordinary Readers; which very probably it may have; but better Judges will put another Construction upon it. I wish him a better Temper, and so I leave him, to come to the main Argument on which I had chiefly relied.

I will only say this for an Introduction to it, That the best Rule of Criticism is to consider the whole Thread, Strain, and Phraseology of a Book, and not to descant upon the various Significations that the Words themselves taken severally may be capable of. The not considering this aright, seems to have given the occasion to all the odd Comments of the *Socinians*.

The

The Name *Jehovah* was the peculiar designation that was appropriated to God in the Old Dispensation. This the Seventy have rendred quite through their whole Translation, Κύριος; and through the whole New Testament this is the designation that is given to Christ, sometimes with, and sometimes without the Article, and other emphatical Words: From which, since the greatest part of the New Testament was particularly and in the first place addressed to the *Jews*, great numbers of whom Read the Old Testament at that time most commonly in Greek; this conformity of Stile seems very plainly to demonstrate, that Christ was the true *Jehovah*; or at least that the true *Jehovah* dwelt in him. In Answer to this, he denies that *Jehovah* was the peculiar designation of God, and sets up an Argument for this, of which I had made no use, and then he pretends to Answer it; for after he has quarrelled with our Translation of a Verse in the Psalm, and has laid aside some other Translations of those Words, he at lasts settles on this as the true one, *Thou whose name is Jehovah, art alone the most high over all the earth.* I will at present accept of this Translation; for it yeilds all that I pretend to, That *Jehovah* was the known Name of God in that dispensation. I will not enter into the Rabinical Niceties concerning it, as whether it signified the Essence or Eternity of God, or whether it imported only God's being in Covenant with them, and the truth and stability of his Promises: Whatsoever might be the proper signification of the word *Jehovah*, it was at first delivered to *Moses* in such a manner, that there was no need to go to any of the *Psalms* to find out that it was the *Name* by which God made himself particularly known to the *Jews*. That whole Discourse with *Moses* in *Exodus*, is spoken by God in the First Person: *I am the God of thy Father,* ——— *I have seen,* ——— *I am come down,* ——— *I will send thee:* Here is no intimation of a Message carried by an Angel, but plainly the contrary: And when *Moses* asked how he should answer them that should ask him what was his *Name*; God said unto him, *I am that I am.* These words come very near the formation of the word *Jehovah*; and it is plain by what is said Three Chapters after that, *I am the Lord, or Jehovah; and I appeared unto Abraham, and unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the Name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.* It is clear, I say, that by that first Apparition to *Moses*, the Name *Jehovah* was then understood:

Conf. p. 23, 24.

Pf. 83. 18.

Ex. 3. *from* v. 2. *to the end.*

v. 6, 7, 8, 10.

v. 13, 14, 15.

Ex. 6. 2, 3.

derstood: And it is expressly said, *This is my name for ever, this is my memorial throughout all generations.* To all this he may object,
Ex. 3. 2. That in the beginning of that Vision it is said, that *an Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire:* From which it may be inferred, That all that is set down there, was said by this Angel, who speaks in the Name of God, and assumes his Person as being sent by him; and that therefore this *Name* may be given to any one who speaks in the Name of God. But that Vision of the Angel will import no more, but that an Angel appeared in the *Fire*; and by that *Moses* was led to go towards the Bush, and then God himself did immediately speak. This agrees with the whole Context, and puts no force on any part of it: Whereas it is a very violent strain to make an Angel thus speak as if he were the Great God, without any Intimation given that he only spake in his Name. This agrees with that general Remark of the *Jewish* Writers, who observe that when ever the *Sheckinah* appeared, Angels Accompanied it.
7 Acts 38. This agrees also with what is said often in the New Testa-
3 Gal. 19. ment, that the Law was given by *Angels*, though it is said as
2 Heb. 2. plain as words can make a thing, that God himself appeared; that is, that by an immediate Act of his own Power, he made all those Glorious Representations to be seen, and the Voice of the Ten Commandments to be heard. To this also belong those words of Christ concerning his Appearing at the last Day,
16 Mat. 27. *In his own glory; in his Father's glory; and in the glory of his Angels:* Together with all that is said of Angels Appearing with
25 Mat. 31. him at the final Judgment: The Charge given to St. *Paul, Before God, the Lord Jesus, and the elect Angels*,
8 Mark 38. does also agree with this. So that the *Angel* that first appeared to *Moses*, was only
9 Luke 26. one of the Attendants on this *Sheckinah*, or Manifestation of
13 Mat. 41. God himself. Any Name that is given to a Place, into the
24 Mat. 31. composition of which *Jehovah* enters, such as *Jehovah Tsidkenu* given to *Jerusalem*, is too slight a thing to be stood upon. It is
1 Tim. 5. 21. therefore plain, that *Jehovah* was a Name peculiarly appropria-
Jer. 33. 16. ted to God in the Old Testament, which the Seventy do always render Κύριος. So since Christ is all through the New Testament called by the same Name, this Argument has great force; nor is it shaken by the giving the term Κύριος as a common
Conf. p. 24. compellation to other Persons; as we say *Sir*, or *Lord*; which, as is not to be denied, occurs frequently in the New Testament;

but

but the use of it in a particular discourse, where it is restricted to that Person, cannot be compared to a constant Stile of calling *Christ* simply, and without limitation, *Lord*, *the Lord*, *my Lord*, or *our Lord*, as the designation that belonged properly to him.

Soon after the New Testament was written, *Domitian* would be called *Dominus* simply. Now this was looked on as a strain of Insolence beyond what the former Emperors had assumed: for though the word *Dominus*, as applied to some particular thing, implied no more, but that such a thing belonged to such a Person; yet the term *Dominus* without a restriction, imported that all the *Romans* were his *Slaves*, and that he was the Master of all their *Properties*. The same is to be applied to the use of the word Κύριος: In a limited sense it signifies not much; but in so large and so general a sense, it must be understood to be equivalent to the common use of that word in the *Septuagint* Translation. St. *Paul* rejects their being called the *servants of men* with a just indignation: And yet if Christ is but a *Man*, and at the same time the *Lord of all*, he was no better than the *servant of a man*. So I think this Argument is not weakned by any thing that this Writer has offered against it. *Suet. in Dom.* 1 Gal. 10.

I had brought a confirmation of it from the Prophecy of *Haggai*, of *filling the second temple with glory*: Nothing was built upon the addition of *his* glory; so that this Writer might have concluded, that there was no design, but only the want of exactness in using it. *Filling with glory*, was that upon which the force of this Argument was laid. I shall not enlarge here to shew, that by *Glory* in the Old Testament, the *Shechinah* is generally to be understood. St. *Paul* thought so; for in one place reckoning up the Priviledges of the *Jews*, he says theirs is the *Glory*, and the *Covenants*; and in another place describing the Holiest of all, he speaks of the *Cherubims of glory*. So that by *Glory* with relation to the Temple, that immediate Manifestation of God, could only be meant: This is also confirmed from the word *Fill*, which cannot be applied to any building or decoration, but must be meant of somewhat that was to be *shed abroad* in the Temple. All this will appear very plain if we consider the last words of the Book of *Exodus*, where this Phrase is first used. The Tabernacle was set up with every thing relating to it, according to the Directions that God had given to *Moses*; *Conf. p. 24, 25.* 9 Rom. 4. 9 Heb. 5. 40 Ex. 34.

and then it is said, that a *Cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle:* which is again repeated in the next Verse. These words are also repeated when the History of the Dedication of *Solomon*'s Temple is given; it is said, *That the cloud filled the house of the Lord*; and in the next Verse it is repeated, That *the glory of the Lord had filled the house.* This gives the true key to the understanding of *Haggai*'s Prophecy, which must be explained according to the *Mosaic* Phrase: This gives the key likewise to understand those words of the *fulness of the Godhead that dwelt bodily in Christ*, and of our receiving of *his fulness*. But to apply that Prophecy, as this Writer does, to the rebuilding the Temple by *Herod*, agrees no ways with the words that accompany it, on which I had chiefly built; *of his giving peace in that place, and of his shaking the Heavens, and the earth, and all Nations*: To that he has not thought fit to make any sort of Answer; and yet either these are only pompous words that signify nothing, or they must signify somewhat beyond any thing that can be ascribed to what *Herod* did. That which is the only key by which we can be led into the sense of those words, I mean the words of *Exodus* and *Kings*, does in no sort belong to it: Whereas the Prophecy was literally accomplished by Christ's coming into the Mountain of the House, if the *Shechinah* lodged in him in a more eminent manner than it had done in *Solomon*'s Temple. So, I think, no part of this Argument is shaken.

1 Kings. 8. 10, 11.
2 Hag. 6, 7, 8, 9.
2 Col. 9.
1 John 16.

To this I shall add another remark, which in some sort belongs to this matter, though in his Book it stands at some distance from that which I am now upon. He insults much upon the advantage he thinks he has, because in a place of the *Romans*, it is in our Bibles, *God blessed for ever*; whereas he thinks *God* is not a part of the Text. I will not at present enter upon the discussion of that, but shall only observe, that the force of the Argument from that place, lies chiefly upon the word, *blessed for ever*. After the *Jews* began to think that the Name *Jehovah* was so Sacred, that it was not to be read, instead of it they used this Circumlocution, the *Holy*, and the *Blessed*, sometimes both together, sometimes the one, and sometimes the other. This was a practice in use in our Saviour's time: One of the Evangelists says, that the High Priest asked, If *Christ was the Son of God*; the other reports it, that he asked if he was the

9 Rom. 5.
Conf. p. 29.
26 Mat. 63.
14 Mark 61.

Son

Son of the bleſſed: And St. *Paul* in that ſame Epiſtle ſpeaking of the Creator, adds *Bleſſed for ever*; a form of ſpeech that among them was equivalent to *Jehovah*; and therefore when he ſays the ſame of Chriſt, it was a cuſtomary form of Speech, importing that he was *Jehovah*. So whether the word *God* was in the Original Text, or not, the place is equally ſtrong to this purpoſe. 1 Rom. 25.

The next Argument that I inſiſted on, was the Worſhip that is paid to Chriſt in the New Teſtament; which as it has in it ſelf great force, ſo it ſeemed to have the more weight upon this account, becauſe it muſt be confeſſed, that the *Jews* who could not be unacquainted with the Worſhip of the Chriſtians, never Objected that to them, if we believe the Apoſtles to have writ ſincerely: They mention their other Prejudices, and Anſwer them, but ſay nothing of this: Which ſhews, that if they are allowed to be candid Writers, there was no ſuch prejudice then ſet on foot. And yet if Chriſt was Worſhipped in the *Arian*, or *Socinian* Hypotheſis, this was ſo contrary to the fundamental Notions of the *Jews* at that time, that we cannot imagine that they could paſs it over, who were concerned on ſo many accounts to blacken the Chriſtian Religion, and to ſtop its progreſs: Therefore there being no other Notion in which this Worſhip could give them no Offence, but that of the *Godheads dwelling bodily in him*; and ſince they were not offended at it, we cannot conceive that there was then any other Idea of this matter, but this, which was both ſuitable to their Doctrines, and to the Practice of their Anceſtors during the Firſt Temple. *From p.* 121. 2 Coll. 9.

This ſeems to be ſuch a Moral Argument, as goes farther to ſatisfy a man's mind, than even ſtricter proofs will do: As ſome Preſumptions do convince men more effectually than the moſt poſitive Evidence given by Witneſſes. To all this he has thought fit to ſay nothing but in theſe words; *There are abundance of exceptionable things in that Diſcourſe, to which I have neither leiſure nor inclination to Reply, as ſome others (perhaps) would.* A man who is at *Conf. p.* 26.

leiſure

leisure to Write against any Discourse, should give himself the *leisure* to consider the most important things that are in it, especially if they seem to be New. As for his inclinations, I will not be so severe as to judge of them; though what he has said to question the Authority of the New Testament, as we now have it, gives a handle to a very heavy suspition, That he thought this was not to be answered, but by a more explicite attack made upon the whole New Testament, than he thought fit to adventure upon at present.

He goes on alledging some instances where God and Creatures seem to be mixed in the same Acts and Expressions: *The People worshipped the Lord and the King.* St. *Paul* is adjured *before God, Christ, and the elect Angels.* *The people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel; and they believed the Lord and Moses.* From which he infers, That both Kings and Prophets were Worshipped and Believed without any Idolatry. If we had no other warrants for the Worship of Jesus Christ, but such general Words, I should easily acknowledge that there were no great force in them: The falling down to him prostrate, and Worshipping him while he was here on Earth, and the Believing what he then said, will not infer *Adoration*: But the Prayers Offered up to him now that he is in Heaven, the *command of honouring the Son, even as the Father is honoured*; the Worship that Angels and Saints in Heaven Offer to him, are such evident Characters of Divine Honour, that we have lost all the Notions of Idolatry, if these things can be offered to a Creature. This Writer would indeed reduce all this to as narrow a point as can be; as if Christ did only in the Vertue of his Death, offer up on our behalf a general Intercession; for he doubts whether there is any special Intercession made for us or not. The Story of St. *Paul's* Conversion is plainly contrary to this: St. *Paul* Praying to him when he was in his Temptation by the Messenger of *Satan*, and the Answer he obtained, do very clearly shew Christ's Immediate Hearing and Answering of Prayer; which is urged by *Socinus* himself with great force against those

Ibid. 1 Chron. 29. 20. 1 Tim. 5. 21. 1 Sam. 12. 18. 14 Ex. 31. *Ibid.* 9 Acts 5. 17. 2 Cor. 12. 8, 9.

those who did not Worship the *Lord Jesus*. St. *Stephen* died Worshipping him, and Praying, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*; and, *Lord lay not this to their charge*. These are such express Authorities of a Spiritual Worship, which do so fully explain the meaning of that general Rule, That *all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*; that the Invocating and Worshipping of Christ is as fully set forth in the New Testament, as any one part of the Christian Religion whatsoever. Invocation must import both Omniscience, and Omnipresence, as well as Omnipotency. We call on him as supposing that he is near us, that he hears us, and both will and can help us. Now this Writer had best consider how all this can be offered to a meer Creature. The *Honour* or Worship that we give to the Father, is the acknowledging his Infinite Perfections, together with the tender of our Homage to him. This cannot be offered to a Creature, without manifest Impiety: Nor can any such Worship become ever the matter of a Divine Precept; because there is an essential Incongruity between these Acts and a created Object; and by consequence, there is an essential Immorality in them. Now that all Idolatry should be so severely forbid in the New Testament, and yet so grosly practised in it, must be indeed a very strong Argument against the whole Christian Religion, if Christ was a meer Creature, which cannot be excused by any softenings whatsoever. 7 Acts 59, 60.

But since this is a Consideration so much insisted upon, it may be proper to open it with its utmost force: When the New Testament was writ, there were Four sorts of men that could only be considered by the Penmen of it; *1st.* The *Jews*, to whom it was to be offered in the first place. They were strongly possessed against all the appearances of Idolatry; and had never Prayed to *Moses* nor *Elijah*, the Chief of their Prophets. *2dly.* The *Gentiles*, they were abandoned to all the several sorts of Idolatry, from all which they were to be reclaimed, and to be taught to Serve and Worship none but the Living God. *3dly.* The false Christians, that began early to corrupt Christianity,

Christianity, and to suit it with Judaism and Paganism: They set themselves against the Apostles, and studied to raise their own Credit, by derogating from theirs. The 4*th*. were the true Christians, who were generally weak and ignorant, who needed Milk, and were not capable of hard or sublime things. With respect to all these, we ought to believe that such a Point, as at first view might offend the *Jews*, and harden the *Gentiles* in their Idolatry; as might give advantage to false Christians, and be a stumbling-block to the true ones, was to be plainly and simply delivered; not in pompous expressions, or figures that might seem to import more than was meant by them; but in measured and severe words. The nature of man carries him too easily to Idolatry; so that this inclination was to be resisted and not complied with; and yet St. *John* begins his Gospel with a solemn set of Phrases, that are as it were the Frontispiece and Introduction to it: which if the Exposition of these men is to be admitted, must be only a lofty saying of ordinary matter in very high-flown Expressions. Such likewise must be the Second Chapter to the *Philippians*, with a great deal more of the same strain. If it was meant by all this to worship Christ as the true *Jehovah*, that is, as having the *Eternal Word*, and the *fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him*, then the matter was properly expressed, and suitably to the Doctrine and Practice of the *Old Testament*, and was delivered in a Phrasiology agreeing with it.

But if a new Doctrine was introduced concerning a man that was made a God, that was so called, and was to be worshipped as such, here was such a stumbling-block laid in mens way, and so little care taken either to restrain those Excesses into which Humane Nature is apt to run, or to explain the Scruples and Difficulties that must naturally arise upon it; that it seems to be scarce conceivable how any can entertain this, and yet retain any value for that Religion; I must confess I cannot; and it is so natural for a man to judge of others by himself, that I do not think others do it, or indeed can do it.

I men-

I mentioned ſome other paſſages of the New Teſtament, and I did but mention them, becauſe others have examined them ſo Critically, that nothing was left for me to ſay upon them. But to all theſe this Writer oppoſes a very ſpecious thing; he ſays there is not one of all thoſe paſſages, but ſome one or other of the moſt Learned Aſſertors of the Trinity, has Tranſlated or Interpreted them to another ſenſe: Upon which he takes occaſion, according to the Modeſty of his Stile, to reproach me for my *Confidence*; he thinks, *that aſſuredly I will be aſhamed of ſuch Rhetorications.* It is certain, that when a great many paſſages look all one way, though every one of them ſingly might not come up to a full proof; yet the combination of them all ſhews ſuch a Phraſeology running through the Scriptures, that the conjunction of them all together, gives a much fuller ſatisfaction to the mind, than any one of them, or indeed all of them taken ſeverally could do: Many circumſtances about a fact concurring, grow up to a proof; which any one, or indeed all of them, in their own nature, could not amount to: And therefore if ſuch a Stile runs through the Scriptures, that at every ſtep a man feels himſelf ſtraitned, and that he muſt diſintangle himſelf by the Subtilties of Criticiſm, and theſe often very much forced; a Book full of ſuch Paſſages, may be called a Book of Riddles, darkly writ to puzzle ordinary Readers: But it will be hard to maintain a Reverence for ſuch Writings, to eſteem them Inſpired by God, and delivered to plain and ſimple Readers as a *Lamp*, or *Light* for their *Inſtruction, that by them the man of God may be made perfect.* The concurrence of thoſe Paſſages, the Thread of them, and the Stile of the whole, has a force beyond what is in every one of them apart. If therefore all Criticks have not been equally certain of the force of every one of them, this will not weaken the Argument from them all together. *Conf. p. 29.*

Criticks are like other men, apt to overvalue their own Notions, and to affect ſingularities; ſome to raiſe the ſtrength of thoſe Arguments which ſeem cleareſt to them, may be willing to make all others look the weaker; others

may study to lessen the Credit of such Writers, against whom they may have, on other accounts, some secret resentments; and so they may undermine those Arguments on which they had chiefly built. The first great Critick that begun the weakning of most of the Arguments drawn from Texts of Scripture on this Head, I mean *Erasmus*, did not understand the *Hebrew* so well as he did the *Greek*; so that he considering the *Greek* Phraseology more than that which had arisen from the *Hebrew* and *Siriack*, might often mistake. Therefore the diversities among Criticks concerning particular places, does not weaken the force of those Inferences that are drawn from them; much less the Evidence that arises out of the whole, when laid all together.

Ibid. He thinks *I would have done a Generous thing if I had acquainted the* English *Reader with the doubtfulness of that passage in St.* John's *Epistle, of the Three that bear witness in heaven.* I cannot oblige any man to read all that I have writ, and so do not charge him for not doing it: I have done that more fully than any that I yet know of, and that in a Book, which of all those that I have yet writ, was the most universally read by the most different sorts of People: Nor has my doing that so copiously, and in a Book of such a nature, scaped some severe, but unjust censures. I *will not lye for God*, nor suppress a truth that may become an honest man to own.

Thus I have gone over all that seemed material, and to need explanation, on the first Head concerning the Divinity of the Son of God. I must only explain one thing, with which he concludes those his Considerations. I had illustrated this matter by the *indwelling* of the *Cloud of Glory*, *Oxf. p.* 32. and had explained from that, the *fulness of the Godheads dwelling bodily in Christ*: From thence he fancies this to be *Nestorius*'s Doctrine, and that it is also theirs, who own *That God (by his Spirit or Energy) was in the Lord Christ in a very especial and powerful manner*: and so he pretends that they *submit to my Doctrine*. I can assure him, that both the spirit with which he writes, and the *Doctrines* which he espouses, are such, that I reckon this the heaviest

of

of all the Imputations that he has laid on me; but it is as just and true as the rest are. We do not certainly know what *Nestorius*'s Doctrine was, if it was no more than that he did not allow the term of the *Mother of God* to be due to the Blessed *Virgin*, as some pretend; and that all that was further charged on him, was only a consequence drawn from that; this was no heinous thing: But whatever *Nestorius* himself might be, the Opinion charged on him, and Condemned by the Church, was, That the *eternal word* in Christ, was only of the nature of an assisting Power, like the Spirit of Prophecy in the Prophets; but that it was not so united to him, as to make One *Person* with his *Human Nature*. In this sense I have fully condemned that Doctrine; for as the Soul is united to the Body, and dwells in it, in another manner than a man dwells in a House; and as the Soul actuates the Body, in another manner than a man actuates such Tools as he works by; so the Union of the Human and Divine Nature in Christ is represented in Scripture as the compounding one *Person*, as much as in other men the Union of *Soul* and *Body* makes one Man.

If he *submits* to *this Doctrine*, I shall be glad of it; for then he submits to a *Doctrine* which, I think, is very expresly Revealed in Scripture: But for any *Indwelling*, like that of the Spirit of Prophecy, even in the eminentest degrees imaginable, the Epistle to the *Hebrews* does so plainly carry this so much higher, to a thing of quite another nature; and states such an opposition between Christ and all Prophets, even *Moses* himself, like that of a *Son* and a *Servant*, that I think the reading that with due attention, will soon satisfy a man, that this *Indwelling* is a *vital* one, like that of the *Souls* dwelling in the *Body*, and not an assisting one, like Inspiration, or the gift of Tongues, or of Miracles. 3 Heb. 3, 4, 5, 6.

When Christ Commanded all to be Baptized *in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; he plainly mentioned *Three*: If therefore I, to adhere to Scripture terms, had avoided the frequent use of any other word but the *Three*, I thought how much soever this might offend others, 28 Mat. 19. *Conf.* p. 11, 12.

who might apprehend that I seemed to avoid mentioning of *Trinity*, or *Persons* (which yet I shewed flowed from no dislike of those *Words*, but merely that I might stick more exactly to *Scripture-terms*) yet I had no reason to think that men of the other side would have found such fault with this. *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, are the *Three* of whom I Discourse; so instead of repeating these words at every time, I shortned it by saying the *Blessed Three*: Now it is a strain particular to this Writer to enlarge on this.

I go now to the *second* Head, concerning the Death of Christ: Here this Writer affirms that, which if it flows from Ignorance, as in Charity to him I hope it does, then certainly he ought not to have Writ concerning a matter, to the History of which he was so great a stranger. He says, that the Doctrine which I propose concerning the Propitiation by the Death of Christ, as an Expiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, has *been the very Doctrine of the Socinians, which they have owned from the beginning in all their Books.* To seem to justify this, he sets down some of my words, leaving out, with his usual candour, those that were most Critical; for whereas I had said, That *Christ had suffered on our account and in our stead*; he leaves out these last words, *and in our stead*; which are the very words on which the Controversy turns, as is well known to those who have studied it to any degree; the turn being whether Christ died *Nostro bono*, or *Nostro loco*: And whereas I had added, that upon the *account of Christ's Death*, God offered the world the Pardon of Sin; he leaves out that which was most Critical here, *upon the account of it*; nor does he mention that with which I concluded the Period; *And He (God) will have us in all our Prayers for Pardon, or other Favours, claim them through that Death, and owe them to it.* Such an unfaithful recital of my words, gives no advantageous Character of the rest.

Conf. p. 31.

It is indeed a strange degree of assurance to make us believe, that the *Socinians* have at all times owned this Doctrine; since not only all their first Writers denied it, and the *Racovian Catechism* is expres to the contrary; but after

after *Grotius* had managed the Controverſy merely in order to the aſſerting the Expiatory Vertue of the Sacrifice of Chriſt's Death, without inſiſting on the Metaphyſical Notions which had been brought into it; yet *Crellius* not ſatisfied with this, endeavoured to Anſwer that whole Book, and adhered ſtill to the firſt Notions of *Socinus*. I do not deny, but that ſince that time ſome of their Followers have come off from them, and have acknowledged the Expiatory Vertue of that *Sacrifice*: Therefore though I have no mind to encreaſe the number of Controverſies, and am very glad when any do forſake their Errors, eſpecially ſuch heinous ones; yet it is a peculiar ſtrain of confidence to ſay, That *this was their Doctrine from the beginning.*

As for the Niceties with which the Primitive Church was not acquainted, and which were not ſtarted before *Anſelm*'s time in the end of the XI*th*. Century, concerning the Antecedent neceſſity of a Satisfaction, and the Subtleties that the Schoolmen did afterwards deviſe concerning Equivalents; I do not think they belong to this matter, as it ſtands Revealed to us in the Scriptures, and therefore I did not inſiſt on them. It is no part of the Doctrine of our Church; and Dr. *Outram*'s Learned Performance on this Subject, has been ſo univerſally applauded and acquieſced in, that I thought all men were ſatisfied from thence, what is the Doctrine generally received among us. Our Articles are the only ſtandard to judge of our Doctrine, as far as they go; but they have determined nothing in this matter, but reſt in the general Notions of Expiation and of Reconciling us to God. In lib. cur Deus homo.

I have now done with all that part of the late Book which falls to my ſhare; and have made thoſe Explanations and Reflections upon it, that ſeemed neceſſary. I have ſaid this once for all, and ſhall no more return to it, upon any new provocation whatſoever: Such crude and bold Attempts, are oftener to be neglected than Anſwered. Theſe men are at beſt the Inſtruments of the Deiſts, who deſign by their means to weaken the Credit of the Chriſtian

stian Religion, and of those Books that are the standards of it. I hope they do not know whose work they are doing, nor what ends they are serving. I pray God give them a better discerning, and more serious Tempers. I wish you may be happily successful in your Attempts to undeceive them, as well as in all your other Labours, in which you lay out your Time and Studies so worthily for the Service of the Church; for which *great is your reward in heaven.* I pray God to Bless and prosper you in them; and am with a very particular esteem,

Reverend Sir,

Your Affectionate Brother,

Westminster,
2 Feb. 169⅔.

and most humble Servant,

GI. SARUM.

THE

THE CONTENTS.

Of the Authority of St. John's Writings. Pag. 3

An Answer to the Objections of our Author's Ancient Unitarians, against the Authority of St. John's Writings, particularly the Gospel and the Revelation. 6

Of the Name Unitarians. 13

Of Ebion and Cerinthus. 13, 18

Of the Alogi in Epiphanius. 14

Of the Occasion of St. John's writing his Gospel. 15

Of Socinus's Exposition of the Beginning of St. John's Gospel. 21

The Unreasonableness and Novelty of that Exposition. 25

The Archbishop's Exposition of Hebr. 1. 1. and Col. 1. 16. vindicated. 33

Of the Pre-existence of our Saviour. 39

Of Christ's coming down from Heaven; and the modern Socinian Exposition of Christ's personal Ascent into Heaven before his Ministry. ibid.

A Vindication of his Grace's Exposition of John 17. 5. John 8. 58. Revel. 1. 8. and John 1. 1. 47

Of the Difficulties and Absurdities in the Socinian Hypothesis. 53

Of the Incarnation of our Saviour. 57

Of the Argument for the Incarnation, taken from the Personal Union of Soul and Body. ibid.

Of the Humility of our Saviour in his Incarnation, and of the fulness of time for it. 60

A Vindication of the Bishop of Worcester's Sermon. 63

Of Things Incomprehensible. 64

Of the Author's Self-contradiction. ibid.

Of God's Eternity, and his being of Himself, and possessing all at once. 68

Several Queries about God's possessing all at once, answer'd. 70

Socinian Mysteries. 73

The Bishop of Sarum's Letter to J. W.

Of the Socinian way of managing Controversies. 81

Of this Author's way of Calumniating. 83

His Charge of the Corruptions in the Sacred Text consider'd. 84

Of the different Opinions concerning the Trinity; and that the Trinitarians may notwithstanding be said to be of the same Religion. 87

The Name Jehovah peculiarly appropriated to God, and yet given to our Saviour. 89

Of the Name Lord; and of the Shechinah among the Jews. 91

Haggai 2. 6, 7. and Rom. 9. 5. explain'd and vindicated. ibid.

Of the Worship given to our Saviour. 92

Of some modern Criticks. 97

Of Nestorius's Doctrine. 99

Of the End for which Christ died. 100

Books

Books lately Printed for Richard Chiſwell.

MEmoirs of the moſt Reverend *THOMAS CRANMER*, Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*. In Three Books. Collected chiefly from Records, Regiſters, Authentick Letters, and other Original Manuſcripts. By *John Strype*, M. A. *Fol.* 1694.

Dr. *John Conant*'s Sermons. Publiſhed by Dr. *Williams*. 1693. *8vo.*

Of the Government of the Thoughts. By *Geo. Tully*, Sub-dean of *York*. The Second Edition. *8vo.* 1694.

A Commentary on the Firſt Book of *Moſes* called *Geneſis*. By *Simon* Lord Biſhop of *Ely*. *4to.* 1695.

The Hiſtory of the Troubles and Trial of the moſt Reverend *WILLIAM LAUD*, Lord Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*; wrote by himſelf during his Impriſonment in the *Tower*. To which is prefixed, the Diary of his own Life faithfully and entirely publiſhed from the Original Copy; and ſubjoyned a Supplement to the preceding Hiſtory; The *Archbiſhop's Laſt Will*; His large *Anſwer* to the Lord *Say*'s Speech concerning *Liturgies*; His *Annual Accounts* of his Province delivered to the King; and ſome other things relating to the Hiſtory. Publiſhed by *Henry Wharton*, Chaplain to Archbiſhop *Sancroft*, and by his Grace's Command. *Folio.*

Biſhop of *Sarum*'s Sermon at the Funeral of Archbiſhops *Tillotſon* 1694.

——His Sermon preached before the King at St. *James*'s Chappel on the 10th of *February*, 169⅘ being the firſt *Sunday* in *Lent*, on 2 *Cor.* 6. 1.

The Poſſibility, Expediency, and Neceſſity of Divine Revelation. A Sermon preached at St. *Martins in the Fields*, *January* 7. 1694. at the beginning of the Lecture for the enſuing Year founded by the Honourable *Robert Boyle*, Eſq; By *John Williams*, D. D. (The Second Sermon is in the Preſs).

A Sermon of Holy Reſolution, preached before the King at *Kenſington*, *December* 30. 1694. By his Grace *Thomas*, Lord Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, Elect.

ADVERTISEMENT. Feb. 25. 169⅘.

THere will be Publiſhed ſeveral Sermons and Diſcourſes of the moſt Reverend Dr. *JOHN TILLOTSON*, late Lord Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, by Order of his Adminiſtratrix; faithfully Tranſcribed from his own Papers, by Dr. *Ralph Barker*, Chaplain to his Grace; which are diſpoſed of to *Richard Chiſwell*, and his Aſſignees. If any Perſon pretend to publiſh any other, except thoſe already Printed, they are to be lookt upon as Spurious and Falſe.

The firſt that will be publiſhed, are his Sermons of *Sincerity and Conſtancy in the Faith and Profeſſion of the True Religion*. Which are in the Preſs, and will be finiſhed in *Eaſter* Term next.